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THINGS *from the*

Glens Falls

NOW and
THEN

A GATHERING OF ITEMS FROM THE
FIRST TEN YEARS OF ITS ISSUE

VOLUME ONE



PUBLISHED BY THE
GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY

1919

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TO BEGIN WITH

IN AUGUST, A.D., 1887, the GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY commenced the issue at irregular and uncertain periods of a "house organ" called the *Now and Then*.

It was and is still the personal work of its then Secretary, afterward President, now retired, Colonel J. L. Cunningham. His sense of humor is always present and contagious. His epigrams expose the frailties of human nature and bring a smile. Even in his seventy-ninth year he still radiates without diminution these rays of sunshine.

For the purpose of perpetuating his work and passing the smiles on to a new generation this volume is printed.

"Things" in this first volume are given in about the order of their appearance in our "little irregularity," up to June, 1896.

The book, like a dictionary, may be opened at any page and read without reference to what precedes or follows, unless you find nothing of interest at first and wish to look forward or backward expecting to find something better. In doing this you will have the pleasure of anticipation, even if it ends in disappointment.

Items which may not have a present interest may be considered historical; others may be found repeated, whether worth it or not. In recognizing "old tramps" — perhaps with a hair-cut or shave — please credit it to your good memory and remember that an ancient wise man said, "There is no new thing under the sun." Anyway, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot?"

We are well aware that the bits of sense are lonesome among the "bunches" of other classification; but the "bunches" seem to have pleased most of our agents most.

Seriously, however, we think that texts may be found for insurance thinking, with intimations, insinuations and suggestions not utterly barren.

*"May be, should ye read it a bit,
Ye'll find good quoted stuff in it."*

R. A. Little
President

GLENS FALLS, NEW YORK
January 1, 1919



"OLD AND TRIED"

Fifty-eighth Year of the Company

Glens Falls

INSURANCE COMPANY

AS ORGANIZED IN 1887

R. M. LITTLE, *President*

J. L. CUNNINGHAM, *Secretary*

R. A. LITTLE, *General Agent*

C. J. DeLONG, *Cashier*

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* * *

"PROSPECTUS" from first number of *Now and Then*:

THIS LITTLE PUBLICATION is not intended to meet any "long felt want" or to fill any "aching void" in the literature of fire insurance; neither is it intended to be a periodical with set times of publication, for, as its name indicates, it will be an occasional affair. Indeed, this first may be its last appearance, although the intention is to repeat the "dose" "now and then," if it proves at all pleasant to "take." It will be a family matter, without particular plan or pretension, beyond the opportunity it may afford of saying things of more or less mutual interest and concern

to our agents and other insurance friends. It may prove a convenient medium for comment, suggestion and advice, and whether sense or nonsense shall most abound, all will be born of good will to all connected with or interested in the "Old and Tried" and of intended good will to the business and those engaged in it. — Aug. '87.

* * *

INSURANCE JOURNALS. — Our business is fortunately favored in the number and ability of the regular and well-established publications devoted to its interests, and we think an agency is not fully equipped unless it takes and is interested in one or more of these class journals. To be without the current news, information, discussion, literature and *technique* which comes chiefly from this source, is to be without an important essential to "up-ness" in the business.

* * *

THE THREE W'S. — Our daily report blanks have this marginal caution: "Know whom, what and where you insure."

We presume some of our agents have never noticed this simple reminder; but with many it has become a rule of practice. One agent says: "I seldom take a risk without thinking of the three W's — Whom, What and Where — and mentally question myself whether I am sufficiently posted on these three points."

There are, indeed, uninsurable men, uninsurable property and uninsurable localities; some so on general principles and other some made so by circumstances.

* * *

BILL J. BROWN — HIS CAREER

BY BOSH JILLINGS

NOAT BY THE AUTHER: This spellin' hes bin supervized bi anuther feller.

A NICE young man was Billy J. Brown,
With smoothest hair in the old-fashioned town,
With talk like honey — softer than down
Was the language of Brown.

As peddler of books, as clerk in a store,
And in other things which he'd tried before,
He had failed, for in brains he was poor —
He ought'er had more.

A smart Fire Special one unlucky day,
Seeking an Agent, traveled that way;
He came, saw, and, surprising to say,
Appointed Bill J.

Hurrah for Brown! He had found the thing
Suiting his talent — that is, give swing
To that ravishing tongue, so promising
To Underwriting.

The spread he made! The cards and signs,
Circulars, blotters and scores of designs
For printing and stamping, multiplied times
The name of BROWN —
Delectable noun —
Expensive to Companies, expressive to Brown.

“General Insurance;” “Cheap, Safe and Sound;”
 “Millions of Assets,” to scatter around
 On any old building cumbering the ground,
 Wherever found
 By the dove-like eye of the jolly Brown.

You wouldn't have let him invest for you
 In common barter a dollar or two;
 Yet thousands on thousands, with little ado,
 By the simple twist
 Of his delicate wrist,
 He monthly pledged his companies to.

He'd give you the form, amount and rate
 To suit your wish — would ante-date,
 After a fire, to demonstrate
 His power for good
 To those who would
 Intrust to him their building's fate.

For three long years Bill J. went on,
 New blocks went up, old shacks burned down,
 To the joy of that old-fashioned town —
 For blessed was fire to patrons of Brown.

He acted as though insurance meant —
 That its first, last, and chiefest intent
 Was a “Commish” of fifteen per cent.;
 And when distressed
 He used the rest.

His companies grew weary — weary and faint
 At the losses from this agency saint;
 Plaintive and sad was their bitter complaint,
 Till they cured the ill
 By removing Bill,
 With whom they were too well acquaint.

He is preaching now — Rev. W. J. Browne —
 The smoothest hair in the new-fangled town —
 Talks like honey — softer than down
 Is the language of Browne.

— Aug. '87

* * *

BOSH JILLINGS, some of whose nonsense will be found in these pages, was some years ago Special Agent for the GLENS FALLS. He, somehow, fell under the inspiring influence of the persuasive editor of the *Monitor*. This influence resulted in rather a continued *bad spell* for that classic journal and the illiterate Bosh. Jillings's efforts, appalling as they were, seemed to have perceptible “sarkasm” and discoverable hits, for they reached even the appreciation of certain foreign journals, which copied some of his orthographical perpetrations. Possibly they were copied as examples of the peculiar style of the underwriting literature of America.

If NOW AND THEN is continued, other re-publications of our old Special's “recreations” will appear, with, perhaps, an occasional new contribution. — Aug. '87.

AGENTS AND REFORM. — The large part of the *personnel* of the business is made up of agents. They have large interests involved and exert a large influence upon the business. They stand between the companies and the policy-holders, between insurer and insured — nearer the companies in the obligations and relation of authorized representatives, yet altogether nearer the public in personal intercourse and contact. They are, therefore, more the educators of the people in fire insurance matters, and the tone and condition of the business in a locality are colored and influenced by the character of the local agents. Of course, an active bad agent will undo good and work mischief; but the days of the bad agent ought to be few, both as to his customers and his companies, and if respectable agents will not give respectability and sanction to his recklessness and malpractice by following his lead, they will at least have less to recover from when he has had his day.

It is certainly not best to at once yield to such men, as the custom too much is, just as it is, also, in case of one company following rather than resisting some new competitive folly of another.

* * *

IF VICIOUS FORMS are offered, do not copy them or add to their viciousness. If inadequate rates are offered, do not drop to them or below them, and while thus approving them, advertise yourself as having heretofore asked exorbitant rates. There is always good argument for good practice and proper rates, and exhaust this first and protest against what you know to be wrong and unreasonable. Give the insurer your opinion and advice and let him take the responsibility. Do not let other agents make your tariff, or be dragged down to the figures of hungry companies or ignorant agents, whose price is just below any other offer. We are every day getting better rates on occasional risks than some other companies on the same risk. This is done by presenting the better grade of indemnity offered, and in comparing hazards. Business men are beginning to learn that rates are ruling below the fire line, and they suspicion a company or an agent underbidding the "market." They recognize the fact that they are getting a more uncertain indemnity from a company writing at losing rates.

* * *

IF A CHEAP OR RECKLESS OR WEAK COMPANY plants an agency by your side, do not weaken your office by getting a similar one yourself; or if you do, do not claim for that company the merit which belongs to the more conservative, solid and lasting ones in your office. Set forth the facts, so that the property owner shall take the poorer indemnity at his own peril. You do yourself, your abundantly sound companies and the business an injustice and hurt when you make special efforts to secure business for a company which is weak or recklessly liberal in rates, practice and commission. It is not the right thing to say: "Here is my list of companies, take your choice." It is worse to say: "I can write you for less in this or that company, and *it is all right*" — provided your higher-rate companies are more than

all right — that is, if they promise a more continuing indemnity. Give the facts, and then if the cheaper insurance is taken, so be it. Take a stand for those companies that promise to live. They are your dependence, and give reputation and character to your office *now*, and they are your reliance for the future. You know that your better companies give better indemnity, more certain and valuable insurance, and you ought not to use the confidence which your customers have in you to dispose of what might not be taken on a full statement of facts.

* * *

WHEN there is local organization and a uniform tariff and rules, not only let it have your sympathy as serving the best interests of the business, but seek to secure for it the good will and sympathy of insurers. Greater possibilities ought to be in it for mutual good than from free competition in rates or practice. The moment you seek to find how much you can violate the spirit of your obligation to it and keep within the strict letter of it, you disturb its usefulness, and when you quote its rates as being arbitrarily made by a "combination," and that the companies *compel* you to get them, and especially when you sympathize with property owners in the charge that board rates are extortionate compared with those that prevailed just before, during a period of "cutting" — you do the business an injury. Defend the need of such organization, the better and more equitable adjustment of rates it guarantees; set forth the benefits and reasonableness of its regulations and your own identification with it in an effort to serve the best ends by the best available means. In other words, defend and sustain your local organization rather than consent, by silence, even, to ignorant and unjust charges against it. Every agent who proposes making insurance his business is as vitally interested in securing a good public opinion of and for the business as are the companies themselves.

* * *

SO, TOO, are agents as much interested in securing a fair profit for their companies as anyone more nearly connected with them. Agents must stand or fall by their record of profit or loss for such periods and under such circumstances as will make that a fair test of ability. It is, therefore, a singular notion which prevails with many agents that they must write everything offered, and that their companies must help them do it. We know that there is great difference of opinion, even among companies, as to what are good or bad risks, either taken as a class or as individual hazards. Circumstances or rates may make a generally acceptable class poor. Some companies having special knowledge and experience may handle successfully a class of business that we do not want. Other companies may not have sufficient knowledge to judge rightly of the desirability of a risk, or a class of risks, which we believe we cannot safely accept. Still others may have more faith in luck and chance, or have more need of premiums, or have some end to serve, and pass a line which we would refuse; so that it is not for us to call risks good because some other company writes them. There are certain risks everywhere which a

local agent, of even little experience, knows are bad risks and should be let alone. A single poor risk is a heavy incumbrance upon a considerable good business.

* * *

ANOTHER FALSE NOTION is prevalent, that a decidedly good risk can be written at almost any rate attainable, and it is reported as the saying of a certain president that "a few additional cents in rate will not prevent a good risk from burning or add much toward meeting the loss if it does burn, while if it does not burn, as it probably will not, the premium is so much gain!" There is a grim nonsense about this which belongs to other easy-going theories. Every risk must be judged of with its class, and the law of average determines the cost of carrying the hazard. When this Company declines a good risk for insufficiency of rate, it is because we believe we know that the rate is below this cost, or that it is below the rate we are charging other risks just as good and in just as good hands.

* * *

WE haven't space to carry out this line of talk to the end, but we do not believe agents are thoroughly conscious of their power and influence for the good of the business. We have offered in this conversation and in other columns of this little paper some suggestions of what agents can do. We do not underestimate their difficulties, trials and labors, their perplexities and embarrassments, nor how much companies themselves are responsible for these unpleasant "environments." The experience of the time is a schoolmaster of the expensive kind, and if our business was as sensitive as it ought to be to teaching, positive reform might be expected, and that soon. Certain it is that no company and no agent or underwriter has any patent-right scheme which will successfully reform the business. Reform must be worked out, all along the line, by reversing all the processes which have contributed to the present situation. But the millennium in insurance — that talked-of-period when the business will be done as it should, and prosperity will smile on all — is too distant and uncertain to wait for, and so we are all forced upon our own individual ability and resources. It is a time when prominence can be gained; when reputation can be made; when underwriters will be tested, as seaman-ship is tried by storms, as soldiers are by battle. *The present is a struggle for the future* with companies and with agents, and the companies and the agents which survive these dubious times and come out healthy and vigorous will be *the* companies and *the* agents of the future. Your customers are your clients, and as you wisely advise and place their insurance so will you be remembered by them; and as you judiciously, discreetly and professionally handle your companies *now*, so will you be remembered by them, also. If you intend to make a continuing business *of* your business, you must be prudent when others are reckless, and while they are intent upon the present *you* must not forget the by and by. With care that the business receives no wounds of our making, ready to coöperate at all times for the general good,

"with offense to none and charity to all," let us go on with our record for the "OLD AND TRIED." — *Aug. '87.*

* * *

IT IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, indeed, that fire insurance agents become familiar with values of property of all kinds in their territory, especially buildings, that they may be able to fix for themselves their *worth*; for the present not only, but to take into intelligent consideration the various causes of depreciation and compute their probable effects during a term of insurance. This is an agent-necessity and can be acquired by a little systematic painstaking. Inquiries of builders and contractors, ascertaining cost of new buildings going up; getting at prices of material and labor; a little practice in estimating and figuring on buildings in course of construction; formulating some safe cubic-foot adjustment for different classes of buildings; keeping in mind the size and quality of buildings of known cost for comparative use, etc. When able to make fairly close estimates of cost to build, remember that *cost* is not always a basis of *value*; not only because many times things cost more than they are worth, but because there are operative depreciations, actual or possible, from various causes which make the criterion of cost unsafe. Take, for instance, unneeded buildings; buildings peculiarly constructed; those which have not been built prudently, are unproductive, unsightly, inconvenient, out of repair, or in hands of slack or slouchy owners or occupants; those affected by change in trade, route of travel, and dozens of other things which bear upon the question of value.

A knowledge of values is needful for assertion against the natural overestimate of owners. All agents know the temptations to over-insurance on the part of the insured, but all do not know that nothing is so damaging to an agent and his business as losses on overinsured property and the unpleasantness which is sure to come from an honest effort at a fair adjustment of such losses. The agent is at once blamed by company and insurer and the community, and the matter is sure to have unfavorable comment and discussion.

We have known agencies with a large business, built up at great labor, positively ruined by the effects of honorable adjustments, which have revealed overinsurance, for which, and the consequent entanglements, bad feeling and dissatisfaction, the agent is responsible. In these times no honest, prudent property owner wishes to pay premium on amounts of insurance he could not recover in case of loss, nor does he wish to incur the suspicion which too often, and sometimes without reason, obtains in cases of overinsurance and fires of unknown origin.

Losses with insurance below value, as it always should be, are promptly adjusted and paid, to the satisfaction of all directly or indirectly concerned, bringing credit to the agent, the company, and to the business.

Agents, acquaint yourselves both as to cost and value of insurable property, and keep your writing below cash worth, and let what you cannot so insure go without insurance, so far as you are concerned. Your commission will be no recompense for the damage overinsurance may bring you and your business. — *Aug. '87.*

EXTRACTS FROM AGENTS' LETTERS which ought to interest other agents:

I HAVE been your agent for thirty years — thirty years to-day. During this time I have, altogether, represented twenty other companies, twelve of which are no more. Only five of the twelve failed or retired while I held their agency, but these gave me cost and trouble to save my patrons loss and to care for expirations, lists of which went into hands of competitors representing companies which reinsured my retiring ones. . . . During the same time there have been twenty-two different persons acting as agents in this village and, beside myself, but two remain — both respectable men of two and five years' experience, respectively. . . . Now, of all my troubles and of all the difficulties the business has suffered here, the very *worst* have come from the Toms, Dicks and Harrys — boys in their goslinghood and old men in their dotage, the failures in nearly everything else and those who had tried nothing else — who have been picked up and started off as agents. The agent who represented here the largest number of companies in all these thirty years, who did the largest business and demoralized matters the most, was a dissipated, graceless youth, whose crimes had been condoned under a promise to reform. During two years of agency glory he robbed his patrons and his companies, annihilated rates and practice and suddenly 'lit out' one night and afterwards got his deserts in a distant State. All my companies, except the GLENS FALLS, went to him and the bad things he inaugurated have not all been overcome yet. He was the worst, but there have been others like him in less degree. Yes, sir, the greatest injury fire insurance has suffered in my 'jurisdiction' has come from some of these many agents and because there have been so many agents and because of the kind of agents, I began to be ashamed of the business myself. . . . Of the companies still represented in this village, none have any credit balance at this point except the five companies I represent, and while the GLENS FALLS has not done the largest business, it has made the most money, and this is because I have tried to strictly adhere to your instructions and the way you wanted things done, just as I try to follow the wishes of my other companies. I write all this, however, to say that I believe that I have been a better agent for a my companies because of your conservative, reasonable and patient instructions, which, somehow, have always impressed me more than those from other offices. You have never seemed to forget the future in meeting present questions." . . .

These are a few extracts from a long and interesting letter from one of our veteran agents — a man who has been successful in other branches of business which he has conducted concurrently with that of insurance. He is proud of his agency and has honored and dignified the business of insurance in his community and is entitled to credit for the "trade profit" of his agency, for his locality has not been called a profitable one. He is undoubtedly right in his estimate of the injury done the business by the character of agency appointments in that field, and his experience in this direction is not an exceptional one. The character of a business will always be estimated by the way it is done and by the men who do it.

* * *

A NOTHER year has passed and the 'Old and Tried' scores another annual balance on the right side at this agency. You and the — are the only companies represented in the four agencies here that have not lost more or less money here for each of the last four years. I used to think you were a lucky company, but when I look over things a little I conclude that you make your own luck. I don't wonder that you are getting a little afraid of this region, for its fire record has changed for the worse, and I'll tell you what has occasioned it, mostly. For the last five years this whole region has been run over by the happy-go-lucky, big splurge agency at —, which, with its four partners and many solicitors, has 'boomed' things so that great hurt has been done the business and the long and changing list of companies

they have held. . . . Those men habitually misrepresented fire insurance. They urged overinsurance, insisting that insurers would get the amount written. They themselves adjusted a few losses and paid more than the property was worth. Other losses were adjusted by the companies' regular adjusters, who, having to fight for their rights under overinsurance, the companies were abused by the agents and the insured and neighbors for not paying the policies in full. Those agents picked up every little petty damage, for which no claims should ever be made, and being small and left to them they paid big, and advertised it and bragged about it. Their argument was: '*Insure so that you can sleep and let fires come.*' Every loss they had, and they had plenty of them, was *profitable* to the insured. They howled about how rich their companies were; what heaps of money they made every year; that they expected fires — wanted them — couldn't do business without fires — and by all this sort of nonsense they got dangerous ideas in the heads of the people. There are men who mean to be honest with their neighbors who don't call insurance companies neighbors, and there are fairly reputable men in every community who can't stand these influences and insinuations, these instigations and temptations. So, while our folks round here average as good as anywhere, still fires have increased and more good money has come in than the value of the property that went up. Of course property has depreciated somewhat, but a good agent ought to meet that danger. I think that the increased fire loss hereabout is due to a false idea of insurance, created by ignorant or vicious agents and careless adjustments. I don't say that fires have been set and that incendiarism has prevailed, but I do believe there has been carelessness; disregard of proper preventions, and some encouragement to accidents, *because* the incentive to prevent fires has been paralyzed by overinsurance and false notions of indemnity. . . . I don't wonder you are anxious and particular about this locality, but you have directly suffered, so far, only in loss of business, and you say you are satisfied to lose business rather than lose on it."

This agent may put too much stress on the influence of his late competitors, but we appreciate the points he makes. We know that there are agents who render their policy-holders unnaturally nervous and apprehensive when the midnight fire alarm is rung, *for fear* "dot vire vos *nod* my clodidgs store in." A good old deacon is reported to have prayed during a terrific thunder storm: "O Lord, preserve me, my family, and my *uninsured* property!"

* * *

WHY do you object to the transfer of a policy to a purchaser of the property insured by it, by an endorsement making the policy good to the new owner? It is often difficult to get the signature to an assignment, and the endorsement plan is acceptable to my other companies." . . .

A policy of insurance, once written and accepted, is a contract between two parties, which cannot be afterwards changed without the consent of both. It is also a personal contract, paid for and owned by the insured, and the company cannot make it the property of another any more than it could transfer the title of any other property of his. *He* may transfer his ownership of the policy to the owner of the insured property, and all the company has to do with it is to approve or refuse to approve the assignment. It then becomes a new contract. The request of the purchaser of property insured at your agency for an endorsement making policy good to him, or his bringing in the policy itself, is not *safe* evidence that the owner has parted with his right in the policy. It is not sufficient to have the *verbal* consent of the owner of the policy himself, for he may deny it afterwards.

Such an endorsement is, of course, binding upon the company, but

may not be binding upon the other party, and, therefore, it may operate to double the company's liability.

Suppose that all the property covered by a policy transferred by endorsement (without assignment), *has* been sold, so that the originally insured has no interest in it; even then he can claim the unearned premium, and, receiving it, the policy will continue under the endorsement all the same. We have had just such cases arising from this loose way of transferring policies.

But suppose all the property named in a policy transferred by endorsement has not been sold; or suppose the terms of sale left an insurable interest in the originally insured. In such a case the policy *may* be good for its full amount to *each* party.

Here is an actual case. A policy was transferred by endorsement at the request of a purchaser of a stock of merchandise insured by it. A fire occurring soon thereafter, it appeared that the boots and shoes and certain other portions of the stock were not sold, and that some of the insurance had expired. Two total claims were made against the company, one by the originally insured, who denied that he had consented to the transfer of the policy, and another by the party to whom the same policy was made good by *ex parte* endorsement. Good lawyers decided that both claims were maintainable against the company; that the endorsement did not affect the rights of the originally insured, but did *repeat* the contract to the party named in the endorsement. A similar complication arose under the peculiar conditions of the sale of real estate, leaving an optional ownership in the grantor. The policy being transferred by endorsement, a loss — partial, fortunately — brought claims against the company from both the originally insured and the party named in the endorsement — both having insurable interests in the property and within the conditions of the policy. Another case: A policy covered farm, barns, and farm produce therein. Policy was, as a whole, transferred by endorsement to the purchaser of the real estate. A fire found farm produce of both parties in the barns sufficient to make two total claims under that item, and, although the purchaser declared that the policy was to be his as a condition of the purchase, yet it was not thought sufficient evidence to contest the claim of the originally insured.

In most cases no trouble would arise, but the right way, and the only *real right* way, to transfer a policy to a new owner is by assignment and approval, thus making the policy itself bear the evidence of the action of both parties to the contract.

Very good opinion holds that the New York Standard policy, which provides a standard form of assignment, cannot be otherwise transferred. *Let us do such things right, whatever others may do.* Therefore, see that the owner of a policy has assigned his interest therein, over his signature, before you make it good to another party. — Aug. '87.

* * *

MORE EXTRACTS FROM AGENTS' LETTERS

THE GLENS FALLS and two of my other companies paid a damage on —, and you asked us to cancel the policy, while the other companies remained on. We wondered why you asked this, because the parties were men of character and stand-

ing, and while the damage was quite clearly incendiary, there was nothing whatever to create the least suspicion that the policy-holders had anything to do with it. The same property was recently burned, and, to be frank, one of the adjusters asked me to find out why you cancelled, and especially whether you had any private information which influenced you."

We had no more information than you or the other companies had. The origin of that first fire was admitted on all sides to have been incendiary. It was also clear that the insured had nothing to do with the origin. It is a rule of this office not to insure or continue insurance of property or parties having suffered suspicious or incendiary, or possible incendiary, fires. If the insured is at all involved in the suspicion, it is plainly the thing to do. But if the insured is beyond all question in the matter, as in the above case, the fact still remains that some one was the incendiary, and it is only logical to believe that the man and the motive still exist, and that the act will be repeated, and more successfully the next time. This may seem to bear hard on the owner, but is it not too much to ask that an insurance company should carry a risk which has been worse than threatened — really suffered an incendiary act? If the cause of fire was unknown, and simply *might have been* incendiary, is it not manifestly prudent to take the benefit of the doubt?

* * *

OF all our seven companies the 'Old and Tried' is the only one that does not furnish us with blanks for monthly reports of 'No Business.' Why is this thus?"

Because it seems that the GLENS FALLS is the only one of your seven companies that expects no "No Business" monthly reports. If that contingency should occasionally arise, however, say so by postal or letter and we will understand it.

* * *

"... I want to mention a thing which I consider complimentary to the GLENS FALLS. Two of my other companies say they will write anything which the GLENS FALLS approves, and the inquiry often comes in connection with requests for further information. 'Is the GLENS FALLS on this?'"

Yes, this is pleasant, and we will thank our agents to so place GLENS FALLS policies that we may continue to deserve this compliment.

— Aug. '87.

* * *

POLICY SUGGESTIONS. — 1. Take good care of your policy blanks, not only because you are responsible for them and a missing blank might work you inconvenience and embarrassment, but because, also, they may be stolen and used to defraud insurers.

2. Never sign a policy in blank and leave none in your office, or anywhere, so signed. It is such carelessness as might make you personally responsible under a policy so signed and fraudulently filled up by an unauthorized party. It is a dangerous practice, as we have had occasion to know.

3. Remember that none but the authorized agent, himself, can sign to bind the Company. He cannot delegate authority to another to sign for him, in his name or otherwise.

4. Never use a *facsimile* signature for policies or any endorsements on a policy, or to any change or other matter of contract requiring agent's signature.

5. Date and sign, as agent, every endorsement upon or attached to a policy.

6. Printed endorsements separately made, and attached to policies, ought to have, on the line of attachment, the imprint of the agent's office, dating or other stamp, so that one part of the print will appear on the policy and the other part extend over on the attached endorsement, so that a different printed endorsement could not well be substituted. The agent can use his own signature, signing partly on the endorsement and partly on the policy.

7. Never transfer a policy from one owner to another by an *ex parte* endorsement — a practice that is getting too frequent. Use the assignment blanks on the back of the policy. A policy is a contract between the Company and the insured, and the agents of the Company have no right or authority to act for the assured in transferring his interest to another. Have the written assignment of the policy by assured to which add your approval and treat an insurance contract as you would any other written agreement. — Aug. '87.

* * *

AN INTELLIGENT FIRE INSURANCE AGENT can be and ought to be a public benefactor in many ways. The particular direction we have in mind just now is that of fire prevention. He can do this in several ways, but we will consider but one — the intelligent encouragement of better and more thorough construction of buildings. If you cannot influence solid fire-wall brick blocks, you can point out scores of habitual defects in buildings going up or being repaired which can be easily prevented or remedied if then pointed out, and fire loss be thus saved. Knowledge which you should have, and which will come to you from experience, insurance publications, special agents, your companies and your own observations, will indicate causes of fires through the ignorance and carelessness of builders. Defects in flues from poor or too little mortar; wood too close to or projecting into chimneys; hearths supported by wood; insufficiently protected hot air pipes and registers; chimney stove pipe holes in garrets or dark unfrequented rooms; chimneys not built from the ground and those projecting flush over roof, so that in settling the part outside resting on the roof separates from the lower part; steam pipes too close to or resting on wood; insecure grates, and many other common causes of fire can be pointed out with such reason as to influence correction. Agents can also save fires by calling attention of owners, municipal authorities, police, fire wardens and others, to dangerous occupancies, uses, and practices; careless customs; negligent ash deposits; combustible accumulations; and the large variety of "incendiary" things so common to a heedless disregard of fire prevention in cities and towns, and even in private dwellings. Many of these things violate policy conditions, and very often a word from an insurance man will correct a situation that, left undisturbed, may bring

damage, even conflagration. We hope to see the day when local agency offices will not only be consulted with reference to fire prevention in construction of buildings and in the police regulations of towns, but when they shall be an influential authority in such matters. — Aug. '87.

* * *

IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS OFFICE to carefully examine daily reports, as received, and try to measure the hazard by this Company's experience and such general results as may be within our knowledge, and while we must rely upon you in judging of the local complexion of risks, we desire, as far as we are able, to apply the tests which come from a broader field of observation and the experience of many years, as indicated by our own and the records of other companies. This seems to us to be an important part of our work and the most difficult. To do it at all intelligently we must have before us more than a simple copy of the policy. You would not write a risk without full information concerning it, and having this information, it will take but little time to give it to us in answer to daily report interrogatories. In these days of an exceedingly close margin in the business, too much care cannot be given to salvage *from* loss, which is better than salvage *on* loss.

It is of considerable consequence to a company, whose officers desire to carefully watch its business and are able to judge of hazard, that they have a complete daily report. It glows with the assurance that the agent knows all about the risk himself, and is willing to represent it with all its circumstances; while it gives supervising officers an opportunity to intelligently judge of it for themselves. It is all there is left of the 'good, sensible, old-fashioned application. It is vital that it be complete, for unless it have some completeness the officer who passes or rejects must do so by intuition. Risks are sometimes refused when a full report would show them satisfactory, and, too often, risks are accepted when a full report would have indicated why they should not be carried.

It is a profound sight to see high-salaried officers, experts in the details of fire hazard, wrestling with or in painful consultation over the sufficiency of a rate or the desirability of a risk concerning which the daily report does not give sufficient information upon which to predicate a decent guess. We are not high-salaried, and will trust our agents to save us from the application of the rest of the above inconsistency. — Aug. '87.

* * *

OFF RISKS.—Now and then an agent submits a risk which does not meet his own approval, and urges its acceptance because of the good business that has preceded it, or because the owner has given him other acceptable business. No good reason can be given for writing a poor or doubtful risk. It takes but a small amount on this kind of risk to spoil the average character of an otherwise good business. It is unpleasant to refuse the urgent request of a respected patron or agent in such case, but it would be no real favor to accept such a risk. Don't adulterate your business or trust to the deceptive supposition that a

poor risk "may not burn this year." Five hundred dollars written on a bad risk endangers five hundred dollars of *premiums* secured on good business. It is due owners of good business that poor risks be rejected, for losses on the poor keep up the rates on the good.

* * *

A MIRACLE

BY BOSH JILLINGS & Co.

(The Co. uv this firm duz the spellin'.)

NIX & VISHTAY, an itinerant firm,
Dealers in notions and ready-made clothes,
Opened a store in a wooden concern
In a part of the town where new brick rows
Made this old frame store
A blot and a scar
Which the citizens swore
Ought not to be there.

A stock was put in, *windows* filled full,
The sidewalk covered with merchandise,
Cheap-stuff shoddy, just sufficiently wool
To cover completely the eager eyes
Of fire-agency men,
Who were first to pay
Their respects to them —
Messrs. Nix & Vishtay.

'Twas an outside show — an inside sham,
Yet they sort of played loth to insure,
But those agents' persistence was more than
These merchandise saints could endure.
They finally did
Take all they desired —
"More permitted
'Till notice required."

'Twas a long, full month — four weeks to a day!
Before the ruining fire came,
Which strange and very unusual delay
I cannot now rise and explain,
A MIRACLE 'twas,
That this tempted store,
Having so much cause,
Hadn't burned before!

* * *

MULTIPLIED ENDORSEMENTS upon and repeated changes in conditions, amounts, or other alterations of policies after written, are objectionable, because they often complicate and make unintelligible what ought, always, to be a plain and simple contract. We have seen policies endorsed to death — the indemnity wiped out by conflicting endorsements.

The better practice is to cancel a policy bearing many, or even a few endorsements, and either write a new policy for the unexpired term, or for a full term, covering the then situation, and thus have a plain and unmixed contract to deal with.

A new policy is the best treatment when there is doubt just what kind of an endorsement is needed to meet a new situation or contingency.

It is not good practice to increase the amount of a policy, or any of its items, or by the addition of a new item by endorsement. To cancel and rewrite gives the simplest contract and is, therefore, the best way to do it.

* * *

IN THE RERATING of towns and in the revision of rates some are reduced and some increased. There is nothing curious about this, but it is queer that immediately so many existing policies on the reduced risks, having more or less time to run, are canceled and rewritten at the reduced rate, or are endorsed to conform to the reduced rate, while the policies on the risks increased are not disturbed. It is a poor rule that does not work both ways and this practice is not a just one. — *Aug.* '87.

* * *

MORTGAGEE CLAUSES. — Because there is a standard mortgagee clause for the State of New York, many New York State agents are using it indiscriminately in place of the usual and sufficient "Loss Payable" clause, in the insurance of mortgaged property.

This standard clause is intended only for special cases of original loans for investment, requiring a well-known margin of value over amount loaned, made after compliance with certain rules of appraisal and investigation of the character and financial condition of the mortgagor, for institutions like Savings Banks, Trust Companies, etc., and we cannot consent that it be used in cases of ordinary commercial mortgages — those taken to secure debts, past due or otherwise, or claims bought up at a discount against unthrifty debtors, or the ordinary mortgages arising in trade and traffic.

There is no good reason why the unfavorable fact that property is mortgaged should secure insurance conditions to any mortgagee which would not be granted to the owner of unincumbered property; yet this is one of the queer things in our business, brought about by competition.

It is plain, however, that it is a clause not to be encouraged — and should be strictly limited to the cases it was provided for, where the value and amount of incumbrance give some promise of relief to the Company under the subrogation clause of the form. Ordinarily the "Loss Payable" clause is far enough to go, and gives to the mortgagee all the indemnity promised to the insured. — *Aug.* '88.

* * *

WITHIN THE LAST YEAR we have suffered loss on risks which we would not have carried had the facts concerning them been known here, and which the agents would not have written had they known the facts themselves. In some of these cases there was clearly no liability, but the fires were none the less unpleasant — cases of mixed title, foreclosure proceedings, embarrassing incumbrance, unmentioned exposures, prohibited uses, previous fires, etc., matters

which agents presumed they knew all about without inquiry or inspection. You will find that the information required by our blank reports is meager enough, and such as every agent should possess before writing a risk. Being in possession of this information, it is but a slight task to make the very brief answers which the blanks are arranged for. Please let us have these answers and give us a chance to share with you the responsibility of deciding upon the risk. Also ask, direct of the applicant, the questions on the blank, and make him take the responsibility of the truthfulness of the answers. Such answers will enable you to write a valid contract, and repeated to us will give some basis for an intelligent review of the risk. — *Feb. '84.*

* * *

A FRESHLY LAUNCHED and youthful commercial traveler worked himself into conversation with a well-known adjuster who chanced to be a fellow traveler. After introductory weather-remarks and suggestions as to the dullness of trade, the young "drummer" ventured to ask:

"May I inquire what line you are in?"

The veteran insurance man replied with such calm, cold dignity as to end the interview, "I am buying ashes, sir."

* * *

A KANSAS WIDOW paid \$56 for a lightning rod which was also warranted to preserve the house against cyclones. When she got her eyes open and sought to arrest the swindler, he was selling a Kansas man a windmill warranted to also keep off malaria.

* * *

THE ART OF GETTING used to things is a soother of competitive irritation.

* * *

A HAND GRENADE STORY. — Hand grenades have had their day and cease to figure as the chief fire protection of risks, or to furnish any argument for reduction of rates, and yet there was a time when a hand grenade equipment was not without its influence in many fire offices. The bonfire illuminations of their itinerant vendors, arranged with all the care of an illusionist, are still remembered by the yet small boy who yelled his delight when the fire fiend yielded to the dextrous grenade bombardment. On one occasion, however, the laugh was against the grenade man.

The announcement had been made in the morning papers and by bills thoroughly distributed, that in the evening a burning building would be made to demonstrate the fire extinguishing power of this "modern wonder." In the meantime, by permission, a sort of "shanty" was erected in the village square and served as an advertisement for the evening's free show. Darkness came, and so did the crowd and so did the stranger with his wonderful bottles. After a lecture on the merits of the grenade, the millions of property they had saved, and the sweet sleep of security they brought to property owners and firemen — he proceeded to ignite his pyre. The flames loomed suddenly

up from the gases generated from the products of petroleum which had been freely applied to the sides of the structure. Just as soon as there was an indication that the gas was giving out and before there was any serious ignition of the wood, the knight of the grenade threw off his coat and let the bottles fly. As each one crashed against the boards higher leaped the flames and more fierce the fire burned! Faster flew the grenades and larger grew the conflagration, till the grenades at hand and their astonished thrower were exhausted. The "shanty" was soon a pile of ashes, and the discomfited vendor of grenades retired amid shouts and jeers far from consolatory; — and to this day he has never learned who drew the corks of his grenades, and pouring out the salt water, substituted kerosene! — *Feb. '88.*

* * *

ANOTHER FIRE GRENADE STORY. — Mr. Jonesie was a matter-of-fact man and believed only what is demonstrated. He had seen a hand grenade thrower perform; had beheld the sudden extinguishment of a gaseous fire; he believed in the grenade and had one dozen of assorted liquid tints sent home, all in a tinned-wire frame, and hung them up in his back stairway.

He was enthusiastic over them, and carefully instructed his wife and servants how to handle them in case of fire.

Shortly after this equipment, one evening when the good wife lighted the gas in the front parlor to make it cheerful against Mr. Jonesie's coming, the innocent parlor match used to do the lighting scattered its surplus "ingredients" to some drapery about the mantel, and when the accident was discovered, there was a growing flame.

With worthy coolness, the Madam at once thought of the grenades, and screaming for help was soon reinforced by the cook. Instantly possessing themselves of the grenades they hurried to the parlor and began throwing them. Mrs. Jonesie was the first to throw — landing it squarely into the elegant mantel mirror with a crash that shattered the mirror, but not the grenade, which falling, ruined an elegant china vase in the corner. This was hardly accomplished before the muscular cook let fly, striking an oil *facsimile* of Mrs. Jonesie's deceased father which hung a distance to the right of the fire, doing exceeding damage to the lifelike expression of the portrait. Mrs. Jonesie, appalled at these two shots, undertook to arrest the cook in her well advanced second effort, but succeeded in only diverting her arm a little, for the third grenade went clear through the plate glass of a side window, landing in the face of a policeman, who was stopped in passing by the noise within. Just then Mr. Jonesie alighted from a street-car, and rushing into his dwelling found his wife nearly fainting from excitement, the cook and policeman in a war of words, and the fire, having consumed the drapery, out. Damage by fire, slight — by grenades, serious. What was not covered by insurance was charged up to experience. The grenades have disappeared from Jonesie's residence, although the cook has been practicing with old bottles in the back yard and now thinks she could "take aff the head uv that polaceman, onct thrying." — *Feb. '88.*

OUR OFFICE BUILDING, of which this is a rather indifferent view, is nothing costly, elaborate or "palatial," but it provides fairly convenient, well lighted and ventilated offices for the transaction of the Company's business. The building was built many years ago and has been twice enlarged to provide needful accommodations, and is now two story, brick, and 50 feet by 50 feet foundations.



The building is heated by steam and well lighted, affording pleasant arrangements for evening work, of which a good deal is done.

Ample grounds in rear provide room for lawn tennis, and other out-door summer exercise and recreation for employees.

In planning this "home" our prudent directors had in view its ready sale for dwelling use, if the company failed. — *Feb. '88.*

* * *

A BROTHER OFFICER writes us as follows: "Bully for the GLENS FALLS. It is the best exponent of the small capital and large surplus idea that we have. It is getting to be among insurance companies what the Chemical Bank is among banks and offers unchallenged indemnity."

* * *

THE HEATHEN CHINEE INSURES

AH SIN AGIN

BY BOSH JILLINGS

WHEN a man is knocked down I don't like ter see
Any further hittin' of him;
But I think in the case of a heathen Chinee,
So lost to square dealin' as Sin proved to be,
I'd go fer to punch him agin.

Yer see, 'twant the fust time, that bizness with Nye,
Thet Sin put on inercent style,
Giv to civilized tricks a most heathenish dye,
Tried our Christian arts with a paganish sly
Which covered his innermost guile.

The trick he played me, and the way it was played,
Made its moral delinquency wuss
Than that stuffin' his sleeve, which this "child-like" essayed,
And proved to the Coast that deceit was the trade
Of this gamblin', almond-eyed cuss.

His ignorance "stuck" me, for most skillfully
He played his know-nothin' hand,
When I talked of insuring his stock of tea,
And urged a prudence which he declared to me
He couldn't half understand.

His looks were so dove-like, his pigeonish coo,
 His celestial, bland sort of way
 Of shruggin' his shoulders and shakin' his queue,
 And winkin' his "almonds," as Chinamen do,
 Hid the scheme he purposed to play.

He fin'ly giv' in to my earnest desire —
 For his good and my little fee —
 And 'lowed me to write two thousand 'gainst fire
 On his piled up chests, filling his store entire,
 Writ over in heathen Chineese.

Ah Sin burned out! O, thet look of despair
 When he told of the fire to me,
 And he did with queer superstition declare
 That my "Melican policee" he threatened to tare,
 Had in some way hell-fired his tea.

Only three chests were saved of his whole stock in trade,
 And these three he offered to me,
 If I'd see that all needed loss proofs were made
 And stand by him 'till his insurance was paid,
 To which I did kindly agree.

Since the day he was paid I ne'er saw him agin!
 'Tis healthy he lit out so spry,
 Or I'd badly fragmented his coppery skin,
 And no one would ever be bothered with him —
 Unless Sin proved smarter nor I.

He'd burned out before! — with insurance, I learned —
 A total loss, paid at You Say;
 But my dander riz and my fears were confirmed,
 When I opened my chests and the fraud discerned,
 For he said 'twas *first chop* "jus likee" what burned —
 Which it was *only chop-ed hay!*

I'd pardon a matter of bizness in him —
 The beatin' a Company, yer know;
 But this *privale* fraud — this here takin' *me* in —
 Won't wash a durned bit — mixes honor too thin;
 So I've sworn revenge on the race of Ah Sin —
 I'm bound the Mongolian must go.

— Revised from its first appearance in the *Monitor*. Feb. '88.

* * *

A SINGULAR fire occurred on Monday, September 9," says the *Insurance Gazette of Ireland*, "at the shop of a dealer in spectacles at Torquay. The sun's rays became focused through the glass of a pair of spectacles which were suspended in the shop window, and thus ignited a blind. The fire and smoke, filling the window, attracted the attention of a passer-by, who entered the shop and aroused the proprietor. The fire was promptly extinguished, as it had not spread far enough to endanger the premises. — *Feb.* '88.

A GOOD MANY INVEST in stocks which they know nothing about for fear the stocks will rise in price.

* * *

OLD AND TRIED," *with variations*. — We have an enthusiastic and lively German agent who delights to mention the GLENS FALLS as his "Old and Dried" Company.

The wife of one of our officers often indulges in another variation, which, in view of her observation that even insurance men get wearied and show it, and that her husband is not quite the "boy" he used to be, *she* thinks, is quite apt. She declares that this legend ought to read "Old and Tired."

The worst yet, however, is this: Our venerable President, the liveliest "boy" of us all, is well known for his decided teetotal principles and practice. An admirer of his being asked what he would say if he should see President Little the worse for whiskey, answered: "I should at once exclaim, 'Old and Rye-d.'" — *Aug. '87.*

* * *

WE WOULD LIKE TO DO IT, but we cannot — that is, respond to the almost everyday solicitations from here and there throughout our agency field for contributions to local fire organizations.

We yield to none in our admiration of the firemen and appreciation of their splendid service. We also feel a decided interest in every improvement of and increase in the facilities for preventing and saving from fire loss, and are rather pleased than otherwise, when local rates are intelligently readjusted to meet such better facilities.

But with these multiplied requests for contributions for Volunteer Protectives, Citizen's Salvage Corps, Bucket Brigades, Firemen's Balls, Hook and Ladder Fairs, Exempt's Festivals, Relief Benefits, Fire Marshals' salaries, and the multitude of other similar objects which seek the favorable consideration of fire offices, they should have some uniform rule, and ours is to respectfully decline. If there be important and peculiarly meritorious cases, let there be a uniform assessment based on the premium receipts of companies, locally; but the fact is, rates should be made to include a careful consideration of the local facilities for fire prevention and extinguishment. This is not always the case — the more the pity — but, as a rule, rates are more favorable to the less efficient and complete facilities, for there is a careless and unwarranted disposition to consider all fire departments about equally good, and all water works about equally sufficient. Anyhow, companies cannot undertake indiscriminate contributions in this direction, not only because of the cost, which would increase with the responses, but because it is not a legitimate expenditure and is likely to be a favor to one locality equally, at least, deserved by others, and none the less so because not asked. — *Feb. '88.*

* * *

IT HAS come to be known that the directors of an almost forgotten fire insurance company at one time thought of having a bust made of their then popular managing officer, but said M. O. made a bust of the company first.

SOME ONE has well said that while we cannot control our circumstances, yet we can control what we do under the circumstances.

* * *

THAT THE GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY was not organized to provide lucrative places for any one, is evident from the following extract from its first charter.

"§ The salaries of the officers shall be as follows: Each Director shall receive the sum of one dollar per day for time actually spent in attending, going to and returning from, meetings of the Board.

"Those residing more than two miles from the office, shall receive six cents per mile for traveling expenses.

"The Executive Committee shall be paid the like sum, except in case half a day or less is spent in the meeting. They shall be entitled to fifty cents.

"The President shall be paid twenty-five dollars per annum, in addition to the above.

"The Treasurer shall be paid twenty-five dollars per annum.

"The Secretary shall be paid a sum not exceeding five hundred dollars for the first year and at no subsequent period to exceed eight hundred dollars per annum.

"No perquisites shall be allowed any of the above named officers."

Train up a company in the way it should go and when it is old it will not depart from it. — *Feb. '88.*

* * *

IS EVERYBODY INSURED? — Has it ever occurred to you that everybody is insured — that is everybody who owns any piece of property? Probably this has not occurred to you, yet it is simply and in the ordinary meaning of language true that everybody who is not supported at the expense of somebody else is insured. If he has not taken out a policy in the usual manner, you ask, How?

"Whenever a piece of property is destroyed, the accruing loss falls on the owner, necessarily. If he holds a contract of indemnity from some association of property owners called an insurance company, he is repaid most of the loss; if he does not hold such a contract, he must pay the whole himself, and get on with it as well as he can. For easy handling, let us take easy figures and say that the property is worth a thousand dollars, and that an insurance policy on it would cost ten dollars a year. If you pay the ten dollars and take a formal policy, you are insured in the everyday sense of that word. If you go without the policy, you pay the ten dollars to yourself by keeping it in your pocket — this is what seems to many persons economy — but you also take the risk of losing the thousand. That is, you receive your own premium and issue your own policy — to yourself — and if you should take the trouble to write out a formal policy to yourself, and sign and seal it, the fact would not be altered.

"Then, is it not perfectly true that everybody is insured somehow, the method being the sole place of variation?"

The above is clipped from the *Independent* and the writer of it

might have added, that while no insurance company would think of carrying the risk of fire on one dwelling *only*, or on a dozen *only*, yet there are individuals who do do it by carrying their own insurance and that, too, when a fire would wipe out the savings of years. — *Aug. '87.*



* * *

IT IS SAID that writers, students and thinkers are helped by an environment and atmosphere suggestive of the subject in process of incubation.

This illustration “catches” an ad-juster who believes in this and exemplifies it in his labor over an itemized and general claim for smoke damage to a tobacco and cigar stock.

* * *

ILLUSTRATED PROOFS OF LOSS. — We recently received proofs of loss from Los Angeles, California, accompanied by an excellent photograph taken while the residence was burning. The fire is the active point of the picture. There is the usual crowd quietly looking on, wondering, no doubt, why “fireproof,” “nonresinous” redwood, which our Pacific Coast friends consider so difficult to ignite, should burn so fiercely. The building certainly appears to be burning about as lively as could be expected under the protest of a single stream which is copiously irrigating the piazza roof.

To our frost-filmed Adirondack eyes there seemed to be an unseasonable number of barefooted boys and men in shirt-sleeves for the 16th day of December, 10 A.M., while the abundant bloom of flowers shown in the surroundings made us disgusted with our thermometer and the snow piles along our street. — *Feb. '88.*

* * *

CREDIT FOR INSURANCE ought to be unknown to the business. Rates are adjusted including the interest on the premium and without having the premium to invest no interest can be earned on it. Besides the custom of giving credit brings a large amount of extra labor to the agent in collecting as well as annoyances and often loss. It makes it necessary for agents to employ capital in their business and many agents declare that collections use up as much time and labor as the soliciting and writing of their business.

Let the local boards begin to adopt rules prohibiting credit for premium and thus make insurance a cash business. It would be a great relief to agents and do away with an evil which competition is constantly increasing.

The cash plan would also give dignity and standing to the business itself, while pay-as-you-please-if-you-please cheapens the estimate of whatever is offered on those terms of payment. — *Feb. '88.*

SEVERAL YEARS ago the GLENS FALLS was interested in the burning of the elegant new "absolutely fireproof" Court House at Newark, Ohio. Our agent sent us three photographs of the Court House at different stages of the burning, the time being indicated by the clock in the cupola, and also a view of the ruins after the fire.

They were satisfactory representations of how a "fireproof" building will burn and how easy a \$20,000 insurance on a \$75,000 building is adjusted. The subject of the photographs cost the GLENS FALLS \$5,000. — *Feb. '88.*

* * *

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

BY BOSH JILLINGS & Co.

GOSS built a saw-mill
At the foot of a hill,
On a precarious stream of water;
In summer 'twas dry,
In winter too high
To run the mill as it ought to.

There was nothing to saw,
No logs in the raw —
Mighty little its regular custom.
So old Mr. Goss
Felt the mill a loss,
Which seriously threatened to "bust" him.

But, think of the bliss
In cases like this —
When our strait is past endurance;
To be permitted
To do as he did —
Cover the cost with insurance.

.
This rotting old mill
Remains there still,
Prepared to "combust" at its leisure;
For 'twould be a "dern"
Ungrateful concern —
Mean mill not to burn,
Under circumstances like these are.

* * *

A MONKEY DID IT. — A monkey overturned a kerosene lamp in the Opera House that was at Westfield, Wis., and thus succeeded in the frolicsome feat of burning that building and the whole town. During the conflagration thieves broke open stores and plundered their contents. After the little excitement the keeper of a dance house upbraided the owner of the Opera House for causing so much of a monkey performance and said owner drew his revolver and shot, probably fatally, the dance-house man. The aggregate loss was \$60,000.

The monkey now takes its place among fire and life hazards.

— *July, '88.*

WIFE (*to husband*) — "I caught Bridget starting the fire this morning with kerosene, John."

Husband — "How much do we owe her?"

Wife — "Four months' wages."

Husband — "Well, let her go on with the kerosene."

* * *

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, useful and ornamental," is about as comprehensive wording as a policy covering such property can have; and yet we every day see forms which undertake, by specific mention of articles, to beat this general form. We have before us the form of a smart agent, invented to show that the agent who wrote the expiring policy did not sufficiently cover the assured's household effects.

"On household furniture, useful and ornamental, *consisting of*," says this form, which then goes on to name some fifteen articles, thus limiting the insurance to the articles named, leaving out the innumerable things which the first six words of the form would have covered besides those named. — *July, '88.*

* * *

VACANCY AND NONOCCUPANCY. — This condition of property has been settled and determined by experience to be an increase of hazard which cannot be disregarded. Naturally the non-occupancy of buildings, with the discontinuance of lights and fires, ought to render a fire less probable, but, actually, such property is more liable to burn.

In the first place vacancy of property indicates, with many exceptions, of course, that it is unprofitable and undesirable and it takes on the character of unproductive property, with all that that implies.

Again, vacant or unoccupied buildings, whether desirable or undesirable as property, are unprotected in a considerable sense and offer a better opportunity for, if they do not invite, the enemy, the incendiary, the tramp and the malicious. Such buildings are more easily fired without detection, regarded less sacred as property, and the crime of burning such a building is arson of less degree, in law, than in case of human occupancy with its danger to life.

It is entirely clear that if a blaze is meditated by any of the numerous incendiaries, who, somehow, have their "spells" everywhere — a barn or unoccupied building will be selected; while there is no better preparation for a *meditated* burning than vacancy.

Unoccupied dwellings containing household property are often more hazardous than when vacant, the contents often adding the hazard of temptation to theft with fire to cover the robbery. Sometimes, too, such dwellings are inviting lodging places for tramps or night rendezvous of the vicious.

The fact that such premises are left in charge of a "competent person" residing in the neighborhood, helps but little, for the danger is *at night* when the "competent person" is asleep. Neither does the excellent character of the owner, which is often urged in mitigation

of such cases, greatly modify the increased hazard, for incendiaries have little regard for persons and even good men have enemies, often unknown or forgotten, who may be waiting for such an opportunity; — for those who fire buildings, or commit other crimes, canvass the opportunities and the chances of detection very thoroughly.

The hazard of vacancy is greater in suburbs and the country than in cities and towns with near by dwellings, night watchmen, police, etc.

In any situation, however, this condition brings some increase of hazard, which should be compensated.

There is a diversity of practice among companies with reference to this hazard. Some insist upon the ordinary extra rate; others give the permit with a three-fourths or two-thirds value clause; others with this clause and also a one-fourth or one-third reduction of insurance clause, the latter serving to increase the rate indirectly. Some companies will not assume the hazard at all, and still others are said to have no rule and, probably, little knowledge of the hazard.

Most of the local boards in the East fix the rate at ten cents per month; others fix that rate for a longer vacancy than thirty days, and others provide no rate whatever.

This matter furnishes an illustration of the careless and indifferent manner in which the business deals with an admitted hazard.

The GLENS FALLS declines, as a rule, to assume this hazard in the country, using its own form of permit and rate in villages and cities where this hazard is not rated. — *July, '88.*

* * *

HOW CAN AN AGENT INSURE HIS OWN PROPERTY in a company he represents? is a question often asked. Of course no one can make a legal contract with himself, or write a strictly binding policy as an agent to himself as an individual. While it may be true that a company receiving a report of such a transaction without objection may be deemed to have ratified it, still the GLENS FALLS advises in case of an agent's property, or property in which he is interested, that it be written in the usual manner and that the policy be forwarded, with the daily report, to the company for an official approval, in writing, upon its face.

Such favors will have prompt attention at this office. — *July, '88.*

* *

THE INGENUITY WHICH SOMETIMES comes to our notice of maneuvering around or steering through the meaning of a rating or rule, amounts almost to a fine art. Sometimes it is the substitution of the "letter" for the "spirit" and sometimes it is a strict construction against the obvious meaning, as may suit some "consummation devoutly to be wished."

Many local boards determine a rate for vacancy, non-occupancy, builders' risks and other privileges, when the extra hazard is for a longer time than *thirty days*, and thus legitimately distinguish between a very brief and a prolonged period.

But some agents interpret the rule as *excepting one month* from the charge, no matter how long the extra hazard is to continue. That is, if the permit is wanted for three months, the charge shall be for two only.

Indeed one agent has gone still farther and presumes to believe that a thirty days' permit may be consecutively repeated without charge.

— July, '88.

* * *

WE ARE SOMETIMES NOTIFIED BY AGENTS that if we have a line of desirable business from them we must now and then carry a bad risk. Now one bad risk exceedingly modifies the general character of the agency's whole business. A single poor risk hazards the profit expected from the good. We must be excused. It is really a singular notion that agents must carry everything that is offered and that their companies must *help them out*.

It is a fact that every agent must stand or fall by his record — by the loss or profit he can show. This must be the test, extraordinaries excepted, just as it must be with companies. Every agent, therefore, who purposes to make insurance his business, is as vitally interested in making money for his companies as the companies are in securing profits for themselves. Why, then, hazard your record by poor and unprofitable risks? Again there is a difference of opinion among companies as to what are the best risks. Organizations having special knowledge and experience can handle, successfully, classes of risks which we could not; so that we would not like to write certain hazards because some other company readily accepts them. It is often, too, a question of appetite, and you know it would be unpleasant to eat what you did not want because some other persons "hanker" for it, even though they fatten on it. We are well aware that most companies have a liking for what we call good, and of course we must be content with our share; but we must not "fill up" with what we do not want — it would not be good for our corporate health. — July, '88.

* * *

WANTED THE INFORMATION FOR FUTURE USE. A New York lawyer tells this story: — "I was trying a case for a fire insurance company. The plaintiff was a Jewish lady whose premises had been burned to the ground, — a total loss. They were insured with my client, and he was called upon to pay the policy. The more he studied that fire, the more convinced he was that it began by the aid of a match and kerosene oil, and yet there was no positive, no legal evidence of arson; but he felt so sure of it that he decided to stand a suit at law rather than pay the policy. The suit was brought, and the plaintiff took the stand. She told a clever story, clearly establishing an alibi, and for the life of me I could not break her down. I probed here and there and everywhere, but she had her tale by heart, and I couldn't discover a single weak spot. At last I gave up in despair and sat down. Then a juror arose. He was of her own race, and a most peculiar expression was on his face, — a look of real, deep anxiety, curiosity and interest. 'Off te court blease,' he said, 'may I ask der vitness somedings? Idt vas fery imbordant.' 'Certainly,' answered the judge. The juror cocked up his eye in the most curious way, laid his long forefinger on his long nose, and said, 'Vat did you do mit der can?' Now, there had been no mention of any can in the case; nobody had suggested a can; and yet that question caused the witness to turn red, hesitate, and stumble. Finally she said she didn't know what he meant. 'Oh, yah,' he answered, 'you know vat I means; vat did you do mit der can?' That question saved us. She gave no

answer, and the jury found a verdict for my client without leaving their seats. After the trial, I thanked the juror, and asked him how he came to think of the question. 'Vy, easy enough,' he said, shrugging his shoulders; 'I wanted ter know. Ve always haf gret droubles mit der cans. She hadt done dot pisseness so vell dot I vas fery anxious der know mineselluf alretty yust vat she do mit der can.'"

— July, '88.

* * *

THIS ILLUSTRATES a snapshot diagram of one of the hazards of non-concurrent insurance. These adjusters are confronted with the adjustment of a loss involving four sets of policies, written by four different agencies, which differ as to items insured and as to their language on any item, and each is trying with striking patience to convince the others of the different ideas of apportionment which he holds.



Gaze on this diagram, take warning and never write a nonconcurrent policy.

* * *

THE FIRE in Col. Doggerty's wagon factory Wednesday evening," says a Colorado paper, "was largely attended. Among the prominent society people who were present we noted Judge and Mrs. Wither- spoon, Senator and Mrs. Poindexter and daughter, Gov. Standish, and Miss Van der Horck. Mrs. Senator Poindexter administered a neat and deserved rebuke to one of the firemen early in the proceedings. Stepping up to a hoseman, she touched his shoulder and said sharply, "Play it lower down, you red-headed chump — get it down where the fire is! You fellers ain't expected to put out the North Star!"

— *Funny Paper.*

* * *

THE AGENT who deals with advance rates or needed improvements in risks or in local fire equipment apologetically and deprecatingly, as if he were executing an unnecessary penalty, will be at a great disadvantage. He is thrice armed who feels that his cause is just.

* * *

THE EDITOR of the *Monitor* has culled out some readable responses to his inquiry of managers and officers, "What would you do if you were king of fire insurance?" meaning a king of the "red-handed, dictator" sort. Possibly the following, in this line, will interest some of our readers, as it shows what a GLENS FALLS man would do were he such a king:

"Pardon my delay in responding to your appreciated invitation to rehearse the part of king in the drama 'What shall we do to be saved?'

but remember that it takes a little time to 'make up' for such an exceptional rôle.

"I am not sure but I would accept, on provocation, the Hawaiian crown, but I must give it as my present opinion that I would not seriously entertain a *bona fide* offer of the insurance kingship.

"I think I could more satisfactorily administer the affairs of high clerk of the weather, and better meet the varied and peculiar demands, notions and pleasures of that constituency—bring every man's crops to a full harvest, and give every one the particular temperature, humidity, and sunshine which he thought would best serve his purpose—than to rule insurance matters with much expectation of satisfying even myself. Mighty uneasy would lie the head (if it lied at all) that wore such a crown.

"However, I am not asked to be a king, only to *play* the part on trial—show how I'd act and what I'd do if I *were* king.

"I suppose to act this part at all feelingly and naturally, a 'feller' should imagine himself crowned, and, mentally at least, feel the pressure of the 'royal diadem,' the grip of the regal scepter, and experience all through his corporeal being the 'divine right' *pro tempore*.

"I am just now in this spirit, and I trust it will last during the period of this writing.

"Not being a broker, I do not feel equal to the 'up-ness' of a 'red-handed dictator,' and yet I do feel just now a little above the 'milk-and-water-limited'-ness of the average officer or manager.

"I confess that the first thoughts of 'my majesty' are of and towards the institution for which I have so long labored in weakness and meekness against the opposition of things which ought not to exist, and which, as king, I would not permit to continue. I would, indeed, like to bring my kingly prerogatives to bear, first and at once, upon the 'other fellows,' and use my royal authority to make my old province (company) an example of prosperity, propriety and usefulness worthy of imitation.

"This would be legitimate, insurancely considered, and, perhaps the ruling of one's own household might be a kingly quality. Fearing, however, that it might be thought too narrow and selfish for majesty, I will remove myself from my accustomed desk and go up at least one story 'aloft' my office environment, and thus get above and beyond the considerations which might otherwise haunt me and hamper the idea of THE GREATEST GOOD TO THE GREATEST NUMBER AND LARGEST INTEREST, which I would make the corner stone of my kingdom.

"I am, therefore, just now sitting on this idea, as it were, way above the vulgar office which claims my best daily efforts to advance and protect its own particular interests—at so much per annum, payable monthly.

"As the first king of a new realm, I first take a glimpse at the history, the antecedents, of whom and what I am to govern.

"Remembering the traditions of my people as chronicled in their own press, and spoken of each other, they seem chronic kickers from way back, and I am a little discouraged at the idea of bringing my subjects under authority. These traditions indicate that they have

not been used to control or restraint, or even much under the dominion of their own judgment, or the teachings of their own experience. '*The greatest good to the greatest number and largest interest*' idea has been a precept rather than a practice. Their greatest number has been '*number one*'; the greatest good '*our*' largest interest.

"Their chronicles allege broken compacts, dissolved unions, fractured pledges and misalliances. They charge unreason, selfishness, faithlessness, recklessness, desperation and rebellion, and proclaim them ungoverned and ungovernable.

"There is unpleasantness in the inference that their tendency to chaos and poverty compels this desire to know what a king would do — yea, even a king of the '*red-handed, dictator*' sort.

"When, however, I consult my own limited knowledge of this putative history, I have the comfort of the consciousness that it is unfair, distorted and exaggerated. In all the world of business I know of no particular realm so honorable, so free from defalcation, wrongdoing or injustice, and so humble, withal, as fire insurance; and when from my upper story throne-room I look out upon the past and behold what it has wrought; how it has saved and preserved trade, commerce, and manufactures; how it has made credit possible and traffic safe; how it has rebuilt cities and turned the ashes of workmen's savings and rich men's fortunes into gold; how it has cheerfully met and faithfully redeemed its promises at the cost of billions; how reliantly it is leaned upon to-day by every phase of property, my imaginary crown scintillates, and my scepter of the mind grows radiant in my actual fist.

"There is honor and glory in the kingdom, but my people are suffering wrongs and grievous hurts, and the king should bring righteousness to pass.

"When I remember what treatment this patient, burden-bearing business has received within its own realm from those who undeservedly eat its bread and live upon its revenues; how its interests have been surrendered, betrayed, or insufficiently served by those who owe it loyal allegiance; how it has been permitted to be abused, belittled and preyed upon by the grasping, dishonest and criminal; by legislatures in unjust, humiliating and oppressive legislation; by courts in studied and ingenious adverse decisions, enlarging its burdens, tying its hands and weakening the judicial protection which it peculiarly needs, and to which it is entitled; by jurors opposing their prejudice against law and equity, rendering appeal to them for simple justice uncertain and hazardous; by the public who think that insurance has no soul to offend, no rights to protect, and no backbone to resist — when I think of all this, and more, and believe that the business itself is to blame for it all, it seems timely and proper to inquire what a concentrated government, what a king would do, to redeem the business.

"As king I would —

"*First*, proclaim officers and managers princes of the realm, with the right of succession to the throne in the order of the most loyal and deserving. Their ears shall be nearest the sovereign utterance. They shall be absolute governors of their respective provinces (companies),

and directly and strictly responsible to the king for the results of their administration, not only so far as their own province (company) is concerned, but also so far as their administration effects 'the greatest good to the greatest number and largest interest' of all the provinces of the whole realm.

"*Second.* Boards of directors are commanded to at once make deliberate and honest investigation of the affairs in their charge, and particularly as to the qualifications and fitness of their officials for the places they hold, whether they are fully equipped underwriters, as well as good and honorable business men.

"You directors are particularly charged with the duty of having officers and managers who know the principles, plans, methods, purposes and details of the business; who have the intelligence, experience, industry, energy and firmness needful to conduct your affairs as nearly as possible as if yours were the only company doing business in the kingdom.

"Receive with hesitancy all pleas of what others permit, or even encourage. Your servants must know what is safe and prudent for your good, not forgetting the general good of the realm, and do it. These officers must not be failures in everything else, or anything else, for remember that it takes a full, well-rounded and complete capacity to make an insurance man. 'Of such is the kingdom,' and 'by their fruits ye shall know them.'

"*Third.* 'Princes of the realm,' officers and managers, having the power, you will be held *solely* responsible for the character, intelligence, ability and thoroughness of all under you in authority, and must exact of them as strict an accountability as you yourselves must render to your sovereign.

"As they live on the revenues of the province, their allegiance to its service must be insisted upon to the smallest detail of direct and indirect doing and influence. Impressed with the honor and dignity of their business (citizenship), they must maintain the integrity, and refuse to inflict an injury upon its reputation or exchequer. 'With charity towards all, and malice towards none,' they must never forget in what particular interest they are enlisted, or withhold any service of obedience to instructions, or of benefit to the realm. They cannot serve two masters — the king and the public. 'Like rules, like people' and the king would have insurance honored until it shall honor those who bear its name and command the respect of the world.

"Now there is enough of these three items of proclamation to bring our business great good, and yet it calls for no more power than now exists, except that which would reside in the king to compel the exercise of existing, but practically forgotten, prerogatives. As king I should be satisfied to begin with what is above laid down, but I will go further and give some notions I would carry out if I were king, and as I am for the present playing that part, I further proclaim: —

"*Fourth.* The king does not propose, nor will he undertake to bring success, that is, profit, to all, much less bring a *like* success to all. He will establish, as far as may seem best, general principles, rules, and regulations, which shall pertain to practice mainly. Matters of

finance, revenue and disbursements will be more largely left to the princes, their advisers and appointees. Therefore, there will be left, as there ought to be, plenty of opportunity to reap the fruits of the better intelligence, loyalty, greater industry, perseverance and capacity which will be possessed by some over others. This will not be a reign of *adequacy* to the extent of bringing profit to good and bad management alike, which, in National Board days of long ago, gave undeserved reputation to mediocrity, and even inefficiency.

“*Fifth.* (a) My princes (officers and managers) are cautioned to at once impress upon themselves the solid fact that the margin of profit is an exceedingly small per centum of the premium revenue of the whole realm, and must continue so; therefore a small per cent of insufficiency of rate is so much, not out of the income, but out of this *small per centum of profit*. That a small per cent increase of expense also comes out of this demonstrated *small per cent of profit*. So with an illegitimate loss, it reaches direct to the reduction of the *small per cent of profit*. Too many underwriters count a loss, or reduced rate, as such a per cent against income, instead of considering it, as they should, as so much against the pittance per cent of profit, and thus make a bad mistake.

“(b) Remember that per cent of loss to property at risk is a safer calculation to depend upon than per cent of loss to premium. The latter computation is affected by the rate, and cannot be relied upon as an expectancy for the future, if the future brings a reduced rate.

“*Sixth.* ‘We’ promulgate the general principle that revenue must be as equitably and uniformly assessed as possible to meet the legitimate demands upon it, and maintain the financial safety of the realm. Rates must be a crystallization of underwriting knowledge and experience; measuring the fire-hazard, internal and external construction, use, means of fire prevention and extinguishment, to the end that no risk be burdened with a rate not belonging to its class, or burden any other class with a noncompensated hazard.

“As officers and managers will be held responsible in all things, the important matter of rates must have their supervision; hence they must insist upon the fullest information concerning every risk, and this information should come from the owner of the property primarily, as the one having the best knowledge of it. This, supplemented by the agent’s additional information and judgment, will give a fair opportunity for something more than a guess of what a rate should be, as well as to whether a risk be acceptable or not. The inequality and indiscrimination of present rates are a disgrace to a business which some call a science, and a decided reform in this particular must be commenced. The extremes of the maximum of hazard and the minimum of rate of particular classes have been tending toward each other, and are too nearly met. This reform must be so positive and precise as to encourage better construction and increased means of preventing and subduing fires, and discourage flimsy building, careless occupancy and absence of fire-preventive appliances. It must go so far as to act practically as prohibitions of risks which, from their location, surroundings, inherent hazard, ownership, occupancy, etc., are too

certain to burn to be profitable at any rate which can be obtained. The insuring public is entitled to better and more discriminating and unyielding rates, especially of classes of risks and towns and owners which year in and year out are a burden to insurance.

"*Seventh.* Expenses which now load the business must be promptly dealt with and reduced to 30 per centum throughout the kingdom the first year.

"(a) Salaries must be apportioned to service and ability to serve, as demonstrated by results. (b) Dividends must not exceed one and one-half the average current rate of interest paid by safe investments; the 50 per cent additional to cover the hazard of insurance capital, (c) No unnecessary capital shall be employed by any company and all in excess of the needs of any company shall be returned to its stockholders. Net surplus is equal security with capital, and surplus asks no dividends. Therefore, cultivate the growth of net surplus, and as it increases capital had better be reduced than increased, especially if increased from the surplus to secure dividends. Net surplus is also a needful provision for the future. (d) The war of competition and campaigning for large income has created too large a standing army, and there must be a mustering out. To that end an inspection will be ordered of the force of officers, managers, general agents, special agents, local agents, subagents, solicitors, compact managers, stamp clerks, middlemen, end-men, supernumeraries, etc., to discover where reductions can best be made.

"*Eighth.* Losses, as a matter making the largest call upon revenue, deserve a separate consideration. We mourn an increase of fire-loss, both as to ratio and aggregate, and flatter ourselves that the increase is but temporary. It will be more safe, however, to calculate upon a further increase of the fire-waste, unless new influences can be brought to bear against it, and some of these counteracting influences have been suggested already.

"(a) In addition to what has been named, let every possible means and influence be exerted to make fires odious, and understood and treated as public calamities so serious that every fire, large or small, ought to be legally investigated, to the end that the responsibility for it be determined, if possible; whether incendiary and what were the incentives; dangerous or defective construction, who was to blame; carelessness, who is guilty, etc. Fires are considered too much matters of course, and largely so because the indemnity of insurance gives the idea that no one need to suffer very much from them, and so a property waste, aggregating its hundred millions per annum, is endured with that contempt which comes from familiarity, while the fact exists that so much property is absolutely wiped out of existence.

"Unquestionably insurance is guilty of much in this direction, and especially in so far as it prevents property-owners positively suffering pecuniary loss, and so far as it deals flippantly and superficially with adjustments. Let the cause and responsibility of every fire, direct and accessory, be fastened by solemn operation of law, before any adjustments can be proceeded with.

"(b) Let no loss be paid within two months after the fire. The cus-

tom of quick payments offers the inducements of the most sudden known means of converting property into money, or raising money out of or upon property to its full value, and even if the owner does suffer some loss, it may be the cheapest, as well as readiest, means of serving his urgent need.

"Besides, 'time is a revealer,' and if sixty days do not bring discoveries, it is none too long for honesty to wait, or for fraud to fear.

"(c) There are two classes of losses which may be estimated as one-third, at least, of all. 1st, those of clearly incendiary origin, with insurance as the incentive, and 2d, those which, had all the facts concerning owner and property been known—and might easily have been found out—would not have been insured. These classes of losses it is the duty of the business, first of all, to eliminate from its records, and it must be done. Some of the ways by which a good beginning can be made have already been noted.

"Much more might be added under this head, but 'the king must not go into details.'

"*Ninth.* A scheme for the general good which is in the king's mind is that competent local appraisers and inspectors, covering a defined territory, within which it shall be their duty to thoroughly inspect, internally and externally, with reference to construction, fire-hazard and value, and make record of their work, to which record companies shall have access. This should be a systematic and competent work, thorough and reliable enough to be depended upon as the basis of rates and adjustments.

"Such an innovation, however, ought to be made unnecessary if the servants of the realm be not only sufficiently competent, but intelligently faithful, falling back upon the old application of owner and inspection report of agent, both under responsibility for their completeness and truth.

"Thus is the king brought back to where he started from, and rings down the curtain upon his brief season of majesty by emphasizing the first three numbers of his royal utterance." — *July, '88.*

* * *

AN INSURANCE critic is one who exaggerates the faults of the business, ignores its virtues and is irritated by both.

* * *

APERSISTENT insurance solicitor unsuccessfully pursued his "prospect" almost daily for months and when said "prospect" died, said solicitor left this significant note upon his grave:

"Rest in peace until we meet again."

* * *

INABILITY to get credit has compelled prosperity.

* * *

SOME conduct their business with acumen and others succeed better with a spot cash system.

THIS PICTURE was considered in the early "days of the "Old and Tried" a fierce enough suggestion of a conflagration to turn the minds of those who saw it to the serious consideration of the need of fire insurance, but, my! how conflagrations have grown since then.



* * *

AN AGENT going to call on a sick brother agent met another brother agent who had just seen the sick man.

"He is a very sick man,"

said the one who had called, "and you must try and say something to cheer him up."

"I will try to," said the one who was going to call. "How would it do to suggest to him that our local board will attend his funeral in a body — eh?"

* * *

INSURANCE TUTOR — Which is most important in building up fire insurance business — quantity or quality?

Student — As a student of theory and observer of practice, I unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative.

* * *

COMMERCIAL CARELESSNESS. Large and destructive fires have been uncommonly frequent in this city and Brooklyn during the last few years, and investigations into their causes have invariably shown that they were due to inexcusable carelessness. It is the fashion nowadays, when any appalling catastrophe occurs, such as a great fire or a terrible railroad disaster, to ascribe it to what the lawyers call "the Act of God." A clever writer in *Science* recently consumed several columns of that paper in an effort to show that all the terrible railroad slaughters of the last dozen years should be laid at the door of this mysterious law of disorder. A more mischievous and demoralizing doctrine could not be preached. Human responsibility is not to be laid aside with a shrug of the shoulders. Persons to whom is intrusted the management of great properties, that hold for safe keeping the lives of others must understand that their duty does not end with the promulgation of a series of rules. They must omit no precaution or expedient that will be likely to enforce obedience to rules. — *New York Tribune*. July, '88.

* * *

JUST OUT OF COLLEGE — I've been thinking about what I shall go at and am wondering if I could do anything in the insurance business. What would you advise?

Veteran Agent — Young man, the simple fact of your hesitating modesty is not at all assuring.

* * *

SPEAKING of an agency applicant a field man said: 'He attaches too much importance to insignificant things, as I observed from his decidedly favorable opinion of himself.'

IT WAS WASHINGTON'S birthday and the president of the local board of underwriters and of the board of education, addressing school children, said:

"Now children, the flags are flying and public buildings are draped with red, white and blue. Now what does that signify?"

"Washington's birthday," came from several voices.

"Yes, indeed," continued the speaker, "but I had a birthday myself, last month. No flags were flying on that occasion. Why this difference?"

"Because," said a squeaky voiced urchin, "Washington never told a lie."

* * *

TO OUR AGENTS: GENTLEMEN, we are intensely interested in our business and in its prosperity, and we are pleased to feel that our agency force is largely in sympathy with us, especially those whom we have known for many years and who have really become a part of our management. They are men who make insurance either their entire business or a *permanent* branch of it. They are not in it for a present "makeshift." Many of them bring to their duties excellent judgment, honest purpose and a carefully acquired knowledge of insurance, and can show a profit for the company built up by a conservative handling of their agency. They are men who consider themselves the *company's* agents and not the attorneys and helpers of insurers who have poor risks to place and low rates to offer and jobs to put up. *They are to be the agents of the future*, when insurance shall become so generally understood that men will care as much for the policy which covers their property as the deed which conveys it; when they realize the truth that their solvency and financial salvation depend upon sound insurance, in sound companies, written by sound agents.

We will not say that we do not have agents who are exceptions, but it is our avowed purpose to have just as few exceptions as possible.

— July, '88.

* * *

OLD LADY (to boy in drug store) — "I have pains runnin' up and down my back, and I guess you can give me a bottle of liniment." Boy — "Wot kind will you have?" Lady — "What's the cheapest you have?" Boy — "I kin give you a good horse liniment for ten cents a bottle."

This sounds like the way some people negotiate insurance.

* * *

BOB," said an enthusiastic, newly appointed life agent, "I think I'm cut out for this life insurance business. Just been buzzing Judge Jones and though he looked like he wanted to git away from me at first, I sailed right in and, Bob, blamed if he didn't seem a good deal pleased when I left. I'll fetch him for \$5,000 next call, sure."

WHY DON'T this Boy keep on Sawing Wood? If you Saw what this Boy sees, would you Saw Wood? He sees Oth-er Boys playing Base Ball.



Some grown-up Boys do not keep on Sawing Wood. That is, do not stick to their Job. They watch Others doing Things which seem Eas-i-er. The work of Oth-ers is Eas-i-er for you when You are not Do-ing it. When some see Oth-ers do-ing Noth-ing, that is what they Rath-er do than Any-thing.

If the Wood is not Sawed, what will Hap-pen when a Cold Day comes?

* * *

AGENT JONES bought and sold stocks as advised by his broker while agent Smith, his competitor, bought and sold contrary to stockbroker's advice, and both were quite equally unsuccessful!

* * *

IF YOU secure risks one day and fail to do so the next, don't take that to indicate that you need to work only every other day.

* * *

WE ARE FAMILIAR with the situation reported in the correspondence below and might add that not more than one-half of the twenty-eight companies represented there four years ago are represented there now. Many have withdrawn badly singed, while others are no more. Some years ago it was considered a good point for business, but now it is marked on the memorandum of many field men as "unprofitable territory," a good field having been ruined by reckless competition.

What an agent says:

I am much interested in that feature of the "NOW AND THEN" which illustrates how competition has demoralized legitimate insurance business and especially legitimate practice, and I want to add a chapter from my experience. I have been an agent for twenty-six years, and the GLENS FALLS was my first company. Eight years ago I represented nine companies and up to that time I did most of the business in this vicinity and did it in my own way.

I never wrote a risk without thoroughly examining it internally and externally, and answered for myself a set of fifteen questions pertaining to the physical and moral hazard, and you know that I have been a profitable servant of my companies. About nine years ago my agency had two losses, both legitimate in their origin, but in one case the claim was largely exorbitant and in the other decidedly dishonest. The interested companies asked me to adjust the claims and I made a decided resistance to the claims which were finally fairly settled by appraisal. A competing agent with one company, under the instigation of a special agent of that company, at once began to make use of these settlements and my "old foggy" notions of going all through a dwelling and my refusal to write for full values, to take away my business. He was a "boomer" and met with success, and in eighteen months had quite an agency, including two companies which I had represented and made money for. This agent proved a defaulter to his companies and was closed up, his companies dividing and starting two new agencies. One of them, the one which did the largest

business, also defaulted, and two more agencies were made from the *débris* of the defaulter. Four years ago, therefore, there were four agencies in this small town representing twenty-eight companies. Of course my business fell off and my companies were reduced to five. I could not meet the competition in kind and while I was obliged to take on other kinds of business for support, my companies were benefited. With less companies in my office those that remained suffered no loss in amount of premiums, while these five companies are the only ones now represented here that have any balance in their favor. You know what your record is at this agency and while the GLENS FALLS has the largest credit balance of any of my companies, the percentage is about the same in all. I have no hope, however, of continuing this record. The situation is demoralized every way by the competition until there is no honor, no comfort and no profit in doing the business. — *July, '88.*

* * *

INSURANCE INSINUATIONS. *One.* It requires no more brains to secure business at cut rates than it would to sell flour below the market.

Two. The one is about as profitable and sensible a business as the other.

Three. Cheap insurance is as good as any, if nothing burns.

Four. It may be worse than none — if something does burn.

Five. It is no test of a company's soundness that it *does* pay its losses; but *can it be made to pay, whether or no?*

Six. It does not make so much difference for an hour's drive whether a horse is sound or not; but for a journey it does. A year's policy runs twelve months — get it from a sound company.

Seven. When you pay "your own price" for anything, ten to one you get cheated.

Eight. The best is the cheapest, and only the best is good, when it comes to insurance.

* * *

A COUPLE OF ENTERPRISING special agents after a hard afternoon's work succeeded in securing the expiring insurance on a large school house for their local agency and writing a good share of it in their respective companies. As the former insurance expired at noon of that day they assisted in writing and delivering the policies and in returning the renewals of the rival agency. The alarm of fire that night did not arouse the tired specials, but turning out for an early train they learned that the school house was in ashes.

The following lines under the letter heading of the agent who lost the renewal of the risk waited them at the hotel office:

Oh! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,

What so proudly ye hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?

Those broad stairs and high dome made a beautiful light

O'er the town, as I watched it so luridly beaming.

And the engines were there; sparks filling the air —

But the loss wasn't mine, what in h— do I care.

* * *

IT IS HARDLY satisfactory to be assured by others that you might if you choose, surpass certain successful insurance men whom you know these others wish to depreciate.

OF A FIRE IN A CERTAIN TOWN remarkable for its frequent fires, a humorous reporter says:

Last evening the loud-toned fire bell rang out its fateful, familiar knell. A thousand or more of our citizens sprang to the streets with their habitual celerity, and all our dogs joined in their accustomed howl. All life, man and beast and moving things, responded with its usual quickness, except our worn-out firemen, who finally came with a deliberate business air born of too-muchness. In thirty minutes from the first alarm the town was bathed in the light of the most brilliant fire that has occurred here this week.

This is of a piece with the item in the local paper of a similarly unfortunate town, noting that "fire nights have been changed from Tuesdays and Saturdays to Mondays and Fridays."

* * *

THE BOOMERANG SEEMS TO BE THE SORT OF MISSILE which the active insurance competitor delighteth to use. There is such a beautiful eccentricity about this savage weapon as to add "uncertainty to the chances" of where it will hit and render it a favorite to the "get business" warriors of our business. So it is that the cunning scheme invented to-day by one company manager or agent for competitive purpose is adopted to-morrow by others, by many next week and becomes a practice during the year, which the inventor and all others would like to be rid of. Competitive invention has fastened a numerous progeny of hardships upon the business. Many little practices, started, or accepted, for local advantage or to secure some particular line, become fastened upon the business to its hurt. Exception becomes the rule and what is hesitatingly done at first is a regular thing after a little. We should be careful of the boomerang in competition,

For aimed with care against our foes
It waltzeth back and breaks our nose.

Better stick to the weapons we are familiar with and which have no serious back action.

* * *

WE ARE NOT so awfully eager to know our faults as to invite the candid expression of our competitor's opinion of us.

* * *

THERE IS a modern sect of insurance Flagellants who make a ritual of lashing others.

* * *

OLD LADY—"Is it true, Mr. Gabble, that the boats from New York to Boston go by the sound?"

Mr. Gabble—"Positive fact, madam; but what has that to do with my having your insurance, which I have tried to show you would be mutually advantageous?"

Old Lady—"Well, I was thinking, Mr. Gabble, that if they can run vessels by sound that you might be running your business by the same power."

THE KANSAS SUPERINTENDENT OF INSURANCE says many true and readable things in his recently published report. Under the heading "To Know the Standing of a Company," he says:

Look at its age. An Insurance Company, like a man, has a character, good or bad. Kansans and United States people generally know very little about insurance. To have age is a great credit to a company. It has stood the test. It must have able and honest management. Then look at Table III, that gives the income of every fire company; at Table IV, the expenditures. Compare the two and you will know whether the company is extravagant or economical; whether it is fooling away its money, or living within its means. Then look at Table VI, and especially at the "Surplus of Assets." That shows the weakness or strength of a company.

Up to this date from July 1st, 1887, to March 30th, 1888, not one letter of complaint has been received in this office in regard to any old Fire or Life Company. Every mail brings letters in regard to new companies.

He also gives this good advice:

Insure with a man whom you know; who lives in your town, has a name and a home. You know he is not an adventurer. He is the licensed agent of companies doing business in the State. The cases of injustice where you insure with the local resident agent are few: he may represent a bad company; he is the first to learn if it is bad, to inform you and to put you into a good company.

* * *

DID HE CUT THE TARIFF RATE? *Property Owner* — Mr. agent, I want \$6,000 insurance on my two dwellings — one on Glen St. and the other on Falls St. — an equal amount, \$3,000 on each. What are the rates?

Agent — "Those dwellings are rated, one at fifty cents and the other at twenty-five cents per annum."

Owner — "Well, as I understand it, then, I must pay \$1 premium for each \$200 of insurance on one and \$1 premium on each \$400 of insurance on the other?"

Agent — "That's correct."

Owner — "Both dwellings can be written in one policy, I suppose, can't they?"

Agent — "Certainly, \$6,000, being \$3,000 on each."

Owner — "Let's see, \$200 insurance for \$1 on one and \$400 insurance for \$1 on the other. That averages \$600 insurance for \$2 on both, there being an equal amount on each building as I reckon it?"

Agent — "You're all right, \$600 for \$2, putting both together."

Owner — "Then six hundred is in sixty hundred ten times and ten times two dollars are twenty dollars, so that the total premium will be twenty dollars?"

Agent — "That's what it will cost you."

Owner — "All right, write it up and here's the twenty dollars." The policy was written up on above basis and the agent was charged with violation of the tariff, in that he ought to have collected \$22.50. — *Is he guilty?* and if so where is the error in the above average.

* * *

IT IS COMMON to charge men with "patting themselves on the back," "kicking themselves," or "biting off their own noses," when kind nature has so arranged human anatomy as to make these self-inflictions impossible.

A NEW agent out West, writing his first line on a boarding-house, is reported to have inserted in the space following the query "What is board rate?" the following:—"Three dollars per week."
— *The Review*.

* * *

TABLE manners depend upon the grub — insurance manners upon the size of the premium.

* * *

ACCIDENTAL

Two thoughtless boys bananas have
And throw the peel upon the pave.

Man, unemployed, that morning prayed
For work, or providential aid.

He only of the passing swarm,
Slipped on the peel and broke his arm.

The boys and peel, were heaven-sent —
Man was insured 'gainst accident.

* * *

A NEW BUILDING, for the home office of the GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY, has been decided upon. While our present building affords fair facilities for the transaction of the Company's business, still, as it has been several times altered and twice enlarged, to meet increased transactions, it is not conveniently arranged and would require a considerable expenditure to make it so.

Our Board of Directors, looking the matter all over, decided not to expend any more money in alterations, enlargement or rebuilding the present structure, but to erect a new one.

When the present building was erected it was to one side of the business center of the village and stood quite by itself, but the growth of the town has surrounded it, largely increasing the value of the large lot upon which it stands, so it has been thought best to sell the present lot and erect the new building at some desirable point where enough land could be had to prevent near fire exposure from other buildings.

In accordance with these views a conspicuous and spacious site has been purchased on Monument Square at the intersection of Glen, Bay and South Streets, Glens Falls, known as the old Sisson Mansion property.

This site covers about eighty feet on Monument Square, reaching back between Glen and Bay Streets as they diverge, some two hundred feet of extreme depth to a point where the distance between the two streets is over two hundred and twenty-five feet.

On this spacious lot it is proposed to erect an unpretentious building of modern construction and large enough for the company's present and prospective accommodation, such a building as shall, with well kept grounds and the pleasant surroundings of that locality, make a delightful and healthful workshop and an ornament to our thriving, well-built and beautiful village. — *Dec.*, '88.

YE OLDEN TIED — *He of the Picture* — “Mary, the day we got married I insured our little home in the GLENS FALLS, and that policy was the fust one I ever had, and it was about all I had in my pocket durin’ the ceremony. While we and our sons have had a good many GLENS FALLS policies on different properties since once in three years a new policy has come on our home to remember me of our weddin’. This is the seventeenth policy and, Mary, to-day is our forty-eighth anniversary. We’ve thrived some, but the ‘Old and Tried’ has growed amazin’.”



She of the Picture — “Josier, I’m not jealous, but hasn’t my company been of some ’count all these years and as remindin’ as that GLENS FALLS has? Now don’t come over and bother my knittin’. Just kiss your dear policy, if you want to.”

* * *

ENTHUSIASTIC SOLICITOR — “Now, Judge, with thanks for your time and patience, permit me to briefly submit another special life plan, which, because of its disadvantage to the company, I seldom discuss. Just bear with me while” —

Judge (getting restless) — “Your using the word ‘bear’ recalls an interesting account which I recently read of a singular discussion between a bear and a boar. The bear with good natured patience bore the boar’s methods as long as he could bear them, and began to bare his teeth in this manner to the boar, when” —

Less Enthusiastic Solicitor — “Forbear, Judge, as the bear forbore; I see what’s brewin’. — I will call again and in the meantime oblige me, and do yourself good, by looking over these documents so I won’t need to explain so much at next call. They will bear investigation and should you want to see me before I get around just drop me a note. I may be an *arguer*, Judge, but I never bore. That red and blue leaflet covers an actual case about your age: a sudden death which bore fruit for the dependent family. And — well — good day, Judge.”

* * *

OUR OFFICE BOY wants to know why a man commencing to chew tobacco is like a man who uses a part of his dwelling as a carpenter shop? Because he must *expectorate* more than before, is one answer. Another, less in the insurance line, is, because he *chews* to do it.

* * *

SILENCE may be golden, but it can’t always be coined into cash premiums.

GROOM (to prospective father-in-law, while waiting for the clergyman). "Hadn't I better skip out and see what the matter is with the minister? He ought to have been here half an hour ago."

Father of Bride (in life insurance). — "No, Henry, you just stay right where you are." Aside to his wife, — "Skip out! guess not. Lost several lives by that sort of thing when I was younger. No skipping out any more when I've got 'em favorable."

* * *

THE EMERGENCIES we are prepared to meet are not the ones that arrive.

* * *

THE MAN who thinks twice before speaking has the advantage of doing twice as much thinking as talking.

* * *

VERY GOOD agents are scarce and very bad ones make themselves so.

* * *

HON. JOHN A. FINCH, of Indianapolis, in a paper before the last convention of the Northwestern Underwriter's Association brings forward some ancient remarks concerning insurance, which have a modern fitness and proves once more that "there is nothing new under the sun." It is a comfort to know that our business is not much worse than it "used to was." He quotes from *Weskett on Insurance*, published in Dublin in 1783, more than a century ago! We quote as follows from Mr. Finch's quotations:

There is scarcely any other occupation or profession, though far more unimportant, and less abstruse or complicate than that of insurance, amongst the whole circle of arts and commerce exercised in this kingdom, where some method of instruction is not looked upon as requisite, and where the persons employed in it are not pretty well versed in the grounds and theory, and the greater part of them experts in the practice of the principles on which it ought to be prosecuted.

.
In fact no other business whatever is, on the whole, conducted, or rather shuffled through, with so much precipitancy, fallacy and injustice.

.
Is it not preposterous to the last degree that underwriters should, as many of them certainly do, in the several respects herein alluded to, actually administer to their own destruction?

He thought, too, that there were some pretty respectable people who even in the "good old times," considered it no sin to defraud an insurance company.

It may, perhaps, be supposed by some honorable and unsuspecting readers that, with respect to fraudulent or deceitful practices these can surely happen only amongst persons of no character, estimation or rank. But, however reluctantly it be said, it is nevertheless true, that there are not wanting several instances, which might easily be produced, of persons in different places who, although they pass for merchants, owners, freighters, masters, etc., of established reputation, scruple not, for interested and avaricious purposes, to avail themselves of the prevalent opinion of them, and the well-known credulity and supineness of insurers, to be

guilty of very foul deceit and craft; whilst the injured underwriter, sometimes even with his eyes open, settles, pays and most wrongfully parts with his property, not choosing to contest against the common prejudice in favor of such persons, or the partiality of insurance brokers, whose private interest and connections too often induce them to aid, smother or wink at such proceedings.

.

But with how much more reason might these observations be applied in later, and especially in the present times, when by reason of the extraordinary increase and variety of novel circumstances of our commerce, and, consequently, of insurance, the extent of our navigation and enterprising genius of our merchants, not to mention the recourse continually had to very great amounts from the merchants of all other countries to the insurers in England, together with the precipitate and slovenly manner in which the business of insurance is, in general, executed. Underwriters are not only liable to every sort of fallacy and perfidy which the ingenuity and corruption of mankind can contrive and put in practice, but even to be insulted with the epithet of litigious, if they complain of it.

.

In truth, I believe that, be the cry even as loud as that of hounds after a hare, which is sometimes the case, the instances are very few where underwriters are so weak, and regardless of the consequences, as to litigate or dispute without any real or apparent cause; or where there is no evasion and denial of fair and satisfactory explanations on the part of the assured or broker; although, from what has been remarked, it cannot be deemed extraordinary, if they be sometimes mistaken.

It is evident from the following that John Weskett had no idea of how much insurance could endure during the century following his "deliberate" utterances.

When good faith, plain dealing and a fair disclosure shall be no longer enforced as formerly by courts of judicature; when, on the contrary, duplicity, collusion, concealment and even smuggling shall find a sanction under color of law, and if no such methods as have been suggested, nor any other should be instituted to prevent redress, or stem the daily progress of imposition and fraud in matters of insurance, the condition of an underwriter of the City of London so exposed, and so unprotected, will become, notwithstanding his utmost prudence, skill and precaution, beyond measure perilous, remediless and deplorable.

He goes on to give us the following peculiar situation, which, somehow, has cast its shadow somewhat perceptibly along the years till now:

There are insurers and brokers who study, and are constantly exercising such artful and entrapping modes of expression in written clauses, and there are leading underwriters who, chiefly attentive to the number of policies which they subscribe, either do not read or perceive the design and tendency of clauses so expressed, and many other insurers who follow implicitly such leaders — and when in the event they find themselves imposed upon by demands of returns, averages and losses, by virtue of the vague and catching manner which is of late so prevalent in the wording of written clauses, they exclaim that they did not understand there was anything unusual in such or such a clause, but *contra scriptum testimonium, testimonium non scriptum non fertur*.

But this insurance Jeremiah of 1783, whose soul still "goes marching on," not only speaks of the then present, but himself quotes from writers of some "long ago" blessed period in the "infancy" of insurance, when it was treated as an "orphan" — fatherless and motherless — and as a "pupil" — learning and teachable — and "never condemned to the utmost rigor" in the courts. He says:

We find it remarked long ago by Gerard Malynes, even when commerce and insurance might be said to be in their infancy in this country, that "assurers are very fitly compared unto orphans, because they may endure much wrong, but cannot commit any." And Ricard, in his *Négoce d'Amsterdam*, quotes from the famous Quinten Wysten, who wrote a treatise on averages, that "the insurers are regarded by all as pupils; that is to say, they are protected in justice as orphans, and never condemned to the utmost rigor; and he advises all those who have any difference with them to agree amicably; for that insurers had always rather grant something than be prosecuted, because this makes them decried as wranglers; but if too much is demanded of them under this belief that rather choose to go to law, in which, it must be confessed, they are not quite wrong.

What a present-day sound these ancient utterances have! — *Dec.*, '88.

* * *

SOME, if they can't be stars themselves become fogs to obscure the shining of those who are.

* * *

CRISPI, the Italian minister of state, in reply to an application for state aid in recompense of heavy losses sustained from a conflagration in that country, remarked, with the abruptness and force characteristic of Richelieu, "The state has no money for those who refuse to profit by the blessings of fire insurance."

* * *

A SACRAMENTO PLUMBER went hunting for a gas leak with a lighted candle, but he never found the original leak. When he crawled out from under the plaster and lath debris he was a sight for the fire department, which had just arrived. — *The Coast Review*.

* * *

WHY SIR," said the fireman, "the ingratitude of some people is away beyond understanding. At the Skyhi flats last week, I saved a stockbroker's daughter, carried her down a spliced ladder seventy feet long. And now" — the poor fellow gasped for breath — "I'm blowed if he don't want me to marry her." — *Burdette*.

* * *

THE *Hudson Register* says that while W. Scott, of North Chatham, was driving through a meadow, Monday, the wheel struck a stone and the sparks fired the dry grass, burning over quite an area. The farm hands had to plow around the fire to stop its spreading.

* * *

GO FOR IT YOURSELF. — The following story, in all save the implied stealing, is commended for the consideration of agents who wait for business to come to them.

An old dorky, whose master had some fine fat turkeys, made up his mind that he must have one of those turkeys, and, as he told the story, he set to work to get it by prayer. "I prayed to the Lord," he said, "that he would send me one of those turkeys. I prayed that way morning and evening for a week, but still that turkey didn't come, and I tell you my mouth was just a watering for it. So I says to myself I must change that prayer. And so I prayed one evening that the Lord would send me after that turkey — and brethren, that turkey was here before daylight."

* * *

THE man who builds and lacks wherewith to pay,
Is less a fool than he
Who owns a home and lives a single day
Without a policy.

QUEER, but true: The tinder-box hotel is admittedly insecure, while in the fire-proof hotel we also feel inn-secure. — *Hotel Mail*.

* * *

THE HOSPITAL orderly, in the following from the *London Hospital*, reminds us of the sort of consolation and encouragement which we find in the addresses, papers and discussions of the late Autumnal gatherings of fire underwriters. Briefly stated, they say of insurance as the orderly did to 'Opkins — "Hinsurance, you're mortal bad" — and so on.

Chaplain — So poor Hopkins is dead. I should have liked to speak to him once again, and soothe his last moments; why didn't you call me?

Hospital orderly — I didn't think you ought to be disturbed for 'Opkins, sir, so I just soothed him as best I could myself.

Chaplain — Why, what did you say to him?

Orderly — "'Opkins," sez I, "you're mortal bad."

"I am," sez'e.

"'Opkins," sez I, "I don't think you'll get better."

"No," sez'e.

"'Opkins," sez I, "you're going fast."

"Yes," sez'e.

"'Opkins," says I, "I don't think you can 'ope to go to 'eaven."

"I don't think I can," sez'e.

"Well, then, 'Opkins," sez I, "you'll go to 'ell."

"I suppose so," sez'e.

"'Opkins," sez I, "you ought to be verry grateful as there's a place perwided for you, and that you've got somewhere to go." And I think 'e 'eard, sir, and then 'e died.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING clipping reminds us that once in a while an agent may talk low rates, and unreasonable privileges, in case of risks which, because they are insured for some time ahead or for some other reason, he cannot possibly get. It is a cheap way of trying to make the insured feel that he made a mistake in not insuring with this particular agent.

Sometimes, too, a property owner will quote, for reduction argument, rates offered or intimated by some agent with whom he would not trust his insurance or whose companies he would not accept. This German sausage man knew how to meet that sort of competition:

"How much do you ask for your sausages?"

"Dwenty cents."

"I can buy them for a shilling of Mr. —."

"Vy you didn't, den?"

"He was all out of them."

"Oh! vell, I sells mine sausages for a shilling, doo, ven I vas oudt."

* * *

THE REASON of Mohammed's reluctance to go to the mountain was the exceeding liability of the average mountain summer hotel to burn.

* * *

THE HALF-TONE portraits of some of our insurance friends are not half toney enough to be good likenesses.

IN STATES HAVING VALUED POLICY LAWS there is imperative need that the care which should be exercised everywhere to avoid over-insurance, should be emphatically emphasized. It may be that the law will prove a dead letter, and one which no honorable man would avail himself of, but, all the same, it is the law, and, while companies are not obliged to do business under it, yet doing it, they and their agents must constantly bear in mind that such a law exists.

As to the class of property to which this law applies, it requires almost the same careful valuation in insuring it as in adjusting a loss upon it, for the law, in its spirit and purpose, is a preadjustment in case a loss occurs.

We say "almost," for while in an adjustment the exact and precise value is needed, in case of insuring you only need to fix the *insurable value*, and as this should not approach the real value, you can be careful to have *all errors on the side of safety*, always. In other words, while it may require a practical builder to fix the *exact* value of a building, any person of good judgment could soon sufficiently post himself so that he can surely name a sum which is sufficiently *below* the exact value to make a safe insurance value. You will see that the contemplation of the law, as well as the imperative need of the company, is that the *insurance value* should be *very decidedly below the real* actual cash value. The insurance value should never exceed two-thirds the cash value, especially where the policy is for more than one year, for the longer a policy runs the greater the opportunity for and liability to depreciation.

Remember always that the cost of replacing a building is not the basis upon which to fix an insurance value. There must be deductions for ordinary and in some cases for extraordinary wear and tear, deductions for unfavorable situations and locations, faulty construction, poor adaptation to the designed use, etc. You probably know of many buildings that are unprofitable and that would not sell for anywhere near the cost of replacing. The cash value is affected by all these things.

The insurance value should always be so low that by no possibility could the building burn during the life of the policy without the insured suffering a loss over and above his insurance. *Make this your rule and consider this an instruction which you must qualify yourself to carry out in your business for this company.* Nothing less is safe under the valued policy law of your state, and insurers must submit to the necessity which the law makes. Avoid dilapidated, vacant and unprofitable structures, buildings put up for experiment and considered uncertain whether they will be profitable or not. Prefer personal to buildings when you can have your choice, but in writing personal find out the amount of insurance on buildings and avoid even personal in over-insured buildings. For the same reason you will find a new element of hazard and danger in buildings exposed by overinsured buildings. Always name the *amount* of other insurance permitted, in the policy and application.

Avoid as much as possible long term policies and write annual policies on buildings as far as you can.

Avoid heavily incumbered property, when title is not settled or plain, and when several separate interests exist in the same property.

Under the law the use of subagents or solicitors ought to be abandoned entirely. Property must have your *own* examination and estimate and be written upon your *own* responsibility. Only the most experienced and most thorough agents, those directly responsible, those whose names are signed to the policies, can be trusted to write a policy on buildings, and even such agents will need to exercise unusual caution, care and intelligence to prevent their becoming the tools of designing property owners who may see an opportunity in this law.

Remember that you are not to be at all influenced by any amount previously written on any property. The question is, how much shall be written now, under the new order of things.

Gentlemen, the one idea of this law is to make overinsurance a peril to the company writing it, an offense for which it and its agents must suffer the cost and the reproach. We do not wish to offend, and must insist that you do not. Unquestionably rates will have to be raised to meet the new hazard, one never entering into the computation of rates before. Among other things, therefore, offer this argument against any reduction and for advance.

Undoubtedly if insurance in your state is conducted precisely as the spirit of the law requires, applied to each insurer as it must be, there will be a popular demand for the repeal of this law as an unwise, mistaken and inexcusable abuse of an honorable, legitimate and loss-repairing business. Insurance has done too much, has become a too honored auxiliary and necessity of commerce, manufactures, agriculture and even of domestic life, to merit the violence which this law inflicts upon one of its fundamental principles, and it is a little humiliating to accept the situation. Let us, however, using all the guards and precautions left to us, undertake squarely and conscientiously the conduct of our business in your state so as to bring no public reproach or corporate loss. *We must largely rely upon you for this result.*

— June, '89.

* * *

THE CASE OF LOST OR ACCIDENTALLY DESTROYED policies is often referred to this office for advice how to supply the assured with evidence of his insurance. Of course such loss or destruction in no manner prejudices the insurance, details of which are on record at both the agency and company offices. Still it is only reasonable that the insured should want the contract in his own possession. The numbering of the policies prevents the issuing of a duplicate, although a duplicate might be furnished from this office. We recommend the following treatment:

Take from the assured a lost policy receipt (this office will furnish blank form) for the lost or destroyed policy, which will cancel and end the insurance under that number. Then issue under current number, a new policy in the precise form and wording, for the unexpired time and *in consideration* of the one lost and canceled. Enter and report the new number same as any newly written policy, but in

place of premium say, "*Issued in consideration of No. . . . , lost and canceled,*" and instead of writing out new copy of form refer to the old number for it.

As no unearned premium on the old number has been returned, or new premium collected, neither need enter into the figures of your agency accounts.

When such lost policy has but a short time to run, the better way is to take lost policy receipt and credit the return premium toward a new policy written for full time and without reference in the policy to the lost number. — *June, '89.*

* * *

IN DISCUSSING the unsuspected causes of many fires, an Ohio correspondent of the *New York Tribune* says:

A few days ago an acquaintance of mine had occasion to repair a chimney, and in doing so put in an oak post as a support between the bricks and the garret window. The next day he discovered this post on fire, although there was no fire in any other part of the house. He promptly extinguished the blaze but kept a strict watch. The next day the same thing occurred, much to his alarm. Passing by, I was called in to see the charred post, and asked for some explanation of the origin of the fire. On examining, I found a circular "blister" in the window glass near the wooden support, convex enough to form a lens — a burning glass. My neighbor was informed that on the next day promptly at 10.30 A.M. his house would in all probabilities be endangered again. True, the fire started, but spectators were on hand to stay it. This incident, in my estimation, does away in many cases with the ultra theory of "spontaneous combustion." In factories and warehouses, where combustible goods are stored within focal distance of such defective glass, such fires will often occur, as any one familiar with the principles of the convex lens will admit.

* * *

SPEAKING OF SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION in Boston during the present year, the *American Architect* says: "In one case a quantity of feather dust in a bedding manufactory took fire without apparent reason. It was found, however, that a piece of thick glass had been lying on the feathers, and the sun's rays, concentrated in some way by the glass, had set fire to them, although the day was a cold one, in the month of March. In another case, a number of tarpaulin hats were lying, packed together, in a window. The high temperature, with perhaps the close packing of the hats, caused them to burst into a blaze. Two other fires were caused by putting paraffin paper, such as candy is wrapped in, into a refuse barrel, which contained a little sawdust; and a third, which destroyed \$20,000 worth of property, was occasioned by putting some greasy paper, which had been used to wrap lunches in, into a wooden refuse barrel, which contained some sawdust and sweepings." — *June, '89.*

* * *

PROPERTY OWNER — "Say, ain't Saturday your Sabbath — the sacred rest day of your faith?"

Jew Solicitor — "Dot ish so."

Property Owner — "How is it then that you are 'round here to-day soliciting insurance; doing business on Saturday?"

Jew Solicitor — "You make yourselef mishtaken. So helb me, mein fren, dot vire insurings vas not beesniss — dot vas some geeffe away — shust only charady vorks."

WE BELIEVE THE TIME HAS COME when the character, financial condition and special features of companies should be presented; that *quality* must be brought into consideration again, especially when there is such a difference in the quality of indemnity as there now is. This matter of *quality* is a fair business consideration, yet one which has been almost lost sight of in insurance matters since prosperity seemed to make all insurance good, for a short time at least.

As to *quality*, the GLENS FALLS has many attractive points, and really offers an indemnity which cannot bring failure with its loss to the purchaser and its injury to the agent.

The company is popular wherever known, and its agency and policies are in demand. It has special features other than those of age, reputation, strength and record, which will commend it to thoughtful insurers, and we NOW APPEAL to you, our representatives everywhere, to give us a fair if not special representation in your agency. There never was a better opportunity for presenting it to the public, for the old-time inquiry as to a company's record and condition is beginning to be made again. We certainly believe that it is impossible for the GLENS FALLS to bring disgrace to your agency, and, gentlemen, if you intend to continue in the business, you will need to provide against any such contingency by any company. — *June, '99.*

* * *

ONE WAY. "I understand that Colonel Blear is very wealthy."

"Well, he's worth about \$100,000."

"How did he make it?"

"He made it out of coal oil."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, his wife lit the fire with kerosene, and he got all her money."

* * *

TO MANY who depend upon the business for bread and butter, insurance is but an acquired taste.

* * *

SOME AGENTS are useful and some I. O. U's full.

* * *

SOME FAIL in many undertakings before they find themselves "cut out" for the insurance business.

* * *

DOCUMENTARY ADVERTISING HAS PROVED EFFECTIVE in our experience. We have experimented in this direction and have secured gratifying results from the judicious and systematic use of the little documents we issue.

Policy-holders should be kept informed concerning the company, that their confidence in it may be continued and renewals saved against the solicitation of others. The best insurers, owners of best property in your vicinity, should be systematically reached, now and then, by mail, by personal delivery, or as you may arrange, with leaflet, pam-

phlet or other document, so that the name of the company, and possibly some of its features, with your name as agent, may be kept before them. Some of this will bring no result, but *where* or *when* it may influence you cannot tell. It wonderfully prepares the way for soliciting, and while you can influence business without reference to your company, you will find it much easier to do it in connection with the company when it has thus been brought to the property owner's attention.

Keep competing agents informed of the company's condition, that they may have *knowledge* on this point, and thereby commit no sin of ignorance against the company or its reputation. It is a courtesy, too, which gentlemen will appreciate. Statements, therefore, mailed to your respectable competitors, as you receive them, will pay.

We know whereof we speak in this regard. The time and manner and frequency must differ with different men and in different localities; but judiciously and methodically done, it will, after a time, certainly bear fruit. — *June, '89*

* * *

A KANSAS paper contains this card of acknowledgment: "Mr. and Mrs. Gartland wish to express their thanks to their friends and neighbors who so kindly assisted at the burning of their hotel last Monday morning." This is too all-fired polite for anything. — *Boston Transcript*.

* * *

CARELESSNESS IN MAKING ENDORSEMENTS on policies is almost an everyday occurrence. Every endorsement changing the form or conditions of a policy should be very carefully worded to cover exactly the desired change only, and if there is any doubt as to what language should be used, it will be better to cancel the policy and write a new one to cover the changed circumstances. In case of the ordinary and simple transfer of insurance to a new location, we have endorsements reported, which, by strict construction, would leave the policy covering in old location, and *also* in the new. Especially does this occur in transfer of some one or more of several items of a policy.

Not only have the fact of transfer plainly appear, but designate the new location by street and number, or other specific description, and *always* add the clause "*and this policy ceases to cover in former or other location.*"

Remember, too, that transferred to a new location it becomes a new risk, and when not shown on map the company needs a diagram of new location, and information as to whether it has other risks exposing.

— *June, '89.*

* * *

A NOTORIOUS SWINDLER CAPTURED. Last Fall a middle-aged man of genteel appearance and good address, called at the office of James Goodman & Co., the Boston agents of the GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY, and in the name of John Lake procured an insurance of \$500 on household furniture and family wearing apparel. He called afterwards to have the insurance transferred to another

locality in the city. His next call was to notify the officer that he had suffered a small damage by the careless upsetting of a kerosene lamp.

Agent Goodman investigated the matter and found the remains of what might have been an elegant feminine wardrobe, silk and other dresses, sealskin and other coats, wraps, etc. They had been partially burned and were still wet with water. Mr. "Lake" seemed reasonable, desiring only what might be thought a fair and just reimbursement under his policy. As Mr. Goodman proceeded in the matter, his suspicions were aroused, but deeming it best to determine the amount of the claim he made up proofs in the sum of \$125 and forwarded same to the company with advice to await further developments.

Mr. Goodman at once consulted Boston's efficient Fire Marshall Whitcomb, and that official made prompt and thorough investigation, resulting in the discovery that the man "Lake" was a swindler of the worst sort. When "Lake" next called on Goodman & Co., to inquire about his claim, he was turned over to the police.

It was found that the man's real name was Arthur R. Abbott, and that he had made a systematic business of swindling fire insurance companies, largely by this use of the same "prepared" wearing apparel. Being already partially burned, he would pretend an accident, wet them as evidence of putting out the fire, collect damage, dry his stock and remove to some other place and repeat his fraud.

He had operated under his real name and many *aliases*.

He had "suffered" his kind of loss at Lafayette, Ind., Chicago, Indianapolis, Omaha, Buffalo, Toledo, Detroit, Albany, Rochester, New York, St. Paul, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, Newark, N. J., Syracuse, Cleveland, and other places. He had done "business" with the Royal, London & Lancashire, American (Phila.), Westchester, Phoenix of Hartford, L. L. & Globe, Germania, German American, Buffalo German, Home, Imperial, St. Paul, Commercial Union, Royal, Newark, Liberty, American Central, Long Island and finally the GLENS FALLS.

How many undiscovered or unconfessed operations, *aliases*, companies and places there are, no one can tell. Marshall Whitcomb thinks that all of Abbott's transactions are not known. He had on hand, when arrested, for future use, policies as John Rix, in German American of Baltimore, as O. H. Curley, in American of Phila., as Geo. C. Cole, in the Spring Garden, and as J. R. Coyne, in Guardian of England.

He pleaded guilty as to the GLENS FALLS charges and has been sentenced to four and a half years imprisonment, and is probably sorry that he ever had a GLENS FALLS policy, or made the acquaintance of its Boston agent; and especially must he feel aggrieved that he ever received the attentions of so thorough and persistent an official as Fire Marshall Whitcomb of the "Hub," for to him belongs the chief glory of this timely capture and conviction. Abbott had found in careless and easy-going adjustments and hasty compromises considerable to encourage his methods, but he tried his scheme once too often.

He is in prison, but there "are others." The plain teaching of this man's long career ought not to be lost to the underwriting fraternity. Beware of strangers. — *June, '89.*

A CYCLONE TALE. — *Circuit Preacher* — “Will you kindly tell me which of them roads I should take to find the Jones’ Corners Baptist Church?”

Cross-road Western Granger — “You’re the new parson I rec’on? Tho’t so. Der yer see that cloud low down thar in the sou’-west, pinting this way with its tail a lashin’ the arth? Wall, parson if yer take that lef’ han’ road and git thar ’fore that tail dus, yer’ll fin’ the meeting house, but if that tail gits thar fust, the devil hisself couldn’t find it. If you and the tail gits thar ’bout together, ye’ll hev a hallaluyer meetin’. I hev had a tussle with a tail like that wunst and I’d ’vise yer to jine me and Sally and the chillen in a little meetin’ in our cyclone dugout till that tail rolls by.”

* * *

A GENTS CANNOT TRANSFER insurance written at their office, to cover in a locality outside their jurisdiction, wherein they would not be authorized to write new policies. In such case, if the new locality is within another agent’s territory, that agent can make the transfer, the removal bringing the policy within his jurisdiction. With local knowledge of the new location, its hazard and rate, he can also act more intelligently as to the transfer.

* * *

WIND STORMS, CYCLONES AND TORNADOES. The increasing frequency and destructiveness of wind storms (which increase is an admitted fact) is creating an increased demand for insurance against this hazard. Many agents are putting in their spare time in pushing this branch of business, with good results. While tornado insurance has all the legitimate features of fire insurance and is growing in popularity, still it is a comparatively new thing and needs special presentation. Careful and prudent business men desire always to fortify themselves against every known danger of loss, and to the completest extent possible. *Keeping* and *saving* are more difficult than *getting*, and successful business men are those who best protect themselves from *losing*. Hence, fire insurance, at first but little used, has come to be an indispensable protection without which credit itself would be a failure.

But the fire hazard, especially as to many kinds of property, is largely within human control by means of prevention and extinguishment, while disasters by tempest and tornadoes cannot be prevented or modified. The path of cyclones or wind-storms cannot be calculated or their devastation mitigated. Fire, even when started, can be fought and resisted, but the hurricane is *irresistible*. THE TORNADO HAZARD IS ONE OF WHICH ALL KINDS OF MATERIAL PROPERTY, IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, IS SUBJECT, AND THAT, TOO, AT ALL SEASONS. It may be the whirlwind which makes the family homeless, or the tornado which carries destruction to a village or city or over miles of territory. Winds have wiped out towns and destroyed country homes both in the East and the West. It is a danger which has not only grown, but one which weather observers and meteorological scientists prophesy is to continue to grow in the future as the result of changing influences of heat, light,

electricity and magnetism, on land, in the sea and in the atmosphere. The actual record of the past and the news columns of every day, however, give abundant reason why this kind of indemnity should be provided for and used by property owners. MORTGAGEES, whether individual or corporate, will readily appreciate Tornado Insurance in cases where the security depends, even somewhat, upon the value of the buildings. It should be a recognized need whenever fire insurance is required as collateral security.

Tornado Insurance can be had at small cost, is within the reach of all, and can be best afforded by those who can least afford to repair or rebuild an unroofed or annihilated home. — *June, '89.*

* * *

A HUSTLING Kansas agent wrote us a few days before the Oklahoma "opening," in the following breezy style:

"I'm on the boom. Guthrie is on it too. It's the *coming* town and I'm arrived. Forward me full agency supplies and authority at Guthrie, for I'll pitch my agency tent there early on Proclamation morning, and take the risks as they are built. Give me the 'Old and Tried.' I go to meet its agency outfit and to live or die at Guthrie."

— *June, '89.*

* * *

SOMETIMES AGENTS ARE ASKED to change a mortgagee's loss payable clause in a policy to the name and for the benefit of a new mortgagee. Never make such an endorsement without positive evidence that the former mortgage is satisfied, or without the written consent of the mortgagee to whom loss was originally payable. The following conditional form might, however, be used: "*With the understanding that the mortgage claim of has been fully paid and satisfied, loss under this policy hereafter occurring is hereby made payable to, mortgagee, as his interest shall appear.*" In case of two mortgages, a first and second, make loss *first* payable to holder of first mortgage, and *second* to the holder of second mortgage.

Always have it appear in the loss payable clause what the nature of the payee's interest is, as mortgagee, trustee, etc. This is too often omitted. — *June, '89.*

* * *

THE PLAIN WANT OF DISCRIMINATION in the matter of risks and rates in fire insurance is a lamentable feature of the business.

How common it is for towns, deficient in or even without a vestige of a fire department or water supply, to have as favorable rates as other towns well supplied and equipped. So with individual risks; how a reasonable concession for improvement or for special features of construction has unreasonably reached an adjoining or near by similarly appearing risk, not having the improvement or better construction, and this followed by further reduction on the better risk when it is found that both are written at the same rate. This seesaw process of undermining rates is a common one in the reduction proclivities of

the day. In comparison of rates for readjustment, the lower one is too apt to be taken as the standard.

The hazard of any two similar risks is rarely precisely the same, yet we have general rates covering certain classes of hazards — minimum rates which, in practice, prove to be the maximum as well. How often we see rows of mercantile first-floor risks in buildings of apparently similar construction, written at the same rate, while the upper story occupancies vary from offices to small manufactories, with division walls, some above the roof, others not, some solid and some with unprotected openings, some neat and clean above, and others with ashes in the halls and rubbish everywhere. Much space might be given to the multitude of examples which could be given in this line, but they are too well known in practice to be repeated here.

A positive and intelligent discrimination as to rates — their equitable adjustment to hazard — would prove an active incentive to improvement in construction, care, occupancy and hazards, in order to merit the lower rate. This consummation may be too much to expect at present, but it must come, as the lessening “trade profits(?)” of the business shall compel an elimination of unpaid-for hazards, or a recognition in rates of the actual differences between what are now counted like risks.

This lack of discrimination in rates, risks, forms of contracts, privileges given, things permitted, etc., rather fails to favor the claim that insurance is a science, if it does not assail its character as an exact and discriminating business. — *June, '89.*

* * *

HOW THE GLENS FALLS appears in the New York report for 1889. 1. Among the 153 State, other State and U. S. branches of foreign offices, the Glens Falls is one of 26 having the *largest* Gross Assets.

2. The Glens Falls is one of 12 having the *largest* Net Surplus.

3. The Glens Falls is one of 8 having the *largest* excess of Income over Expenditures for 1889, including foreign branches that pay no dividends.

4. The Glens Falls stands with the 6 making the *largest* increase in Net Surplus during the year.

5. The Glens Falls shows the *greatest* percentage of Net Surplus to Capital of all.

6. The Glens Falls shows the *largest* gain in percentage of Net Surplus to Capital for the year.

7. The Glens Falls' ratio of Expenditures to Income for 1889 was 79.15, while the average ratio of State companies was 98.23, of other State companies 98.54, and of foreign branches (paying no dividends) 95.35.

8. The Glens Falls' ratio of losses paid to premiums received is 50.06, while the average ratio of State companies is 60.44, other State companies 64.59, and foreign branches 66.84, and the Glens Falls' losses *incurred* in 1889 were less than losses paid.

9. In the State of New York the Glens Falls' percentage of loss to premiums for the year was 51.06. The average ratio of all State

companies was 62.46, companies of other States 66.18, and foreign branches 67.06.

10. The Glens Falls has the *largest* per centum of book value of stock of all.

From the above it will be readily seen that the Glens Falls makes a most respectable appearance among its fellow companies, and this would be still more striking if the figures covered a series of years. It is a sound, solid and progressive company, and does not shrink when compared with its competitors. — *March, '90.*

* * *

THE COMPANY'S PRESENT home has been sold to the Young Men's Christian Association of Glens Falls, as the site of its proposed new building — one of our citizens having made a cash gift of \$50,000 to the Association for that purpose. Our pleasant old home will therefore be torn down when we move into our new office, and a handsome structure will take its place. We will regret to see this old "land-mark" of our village removed, but growth and progress decree that it must go. — *March, '90.*

* * *

AGENTS CAN SAVE themselves some work in the endorsement line, by remembering that a loss payable clause, "as interest shall appear," in a policy, ceases when the payee's interest in the insured property ends. There is no need, therefore, for an endorsement noting that a mortgage, etc., has been paid and that the loss payable clause is canceled. The clause cancels itself, in such case, by its own language.

* * *

MR. SCHWINDLER," said the adjuster, "you will please sign your name in full to these proofs, for while A. Schwindler tells the truth as far as it goes, still it is rather indefinite and partial in that respect. Adam Schwindler will give completeness to the papers, my friend — so just sign your *full* name. Thanks, that's all right and correct and looks well and sounds just as though I had written it myself."

* * *

BLAMELESS poverty never was a disgrace, and shameless riches didn't use to be.

* * *

LOCAL AGENT NO. 1 — "Say, did you know that Spikes is going to place his insurance in outside, irresponsible companies, just for a little saving of premium?"

Local agent No. 2 — "No, hadn't heard of it. Talk with him and show him the folly and nonsense of such a course."

No. 1 — "I have tried to; but he pays no attention to what I say. He only listens to the advice of fools." With a sudden, bright idea, — "See here, I wish *you* would speak to him — he might listen to *you*."

No. 2 — —! —? —! —?!

MICE MULLER AND HIS BURNING-GLASS. — A small boy and a burning-glass did it. It was settled that the fire which destroyed seventy buildings in Moreland was not the work of an incendiary. "Mice" Muller, eight years old, and several companions were playing with a burning-glass behind the Presbyterian church.

"I bet you can't make dat paper burn," said Johnny Gericksen, seven years old.

The bet was promptly taken by "Mice," the proud owner of an old watch-crystal. The paper caught fire. "Mice" won. And the bet was soon paid in a way which has kept the little fellows in terror since. The dry prairie grass caught from the paper and carried the fire to some tinder-like stuff under the edge of the church. In three hours seventy families were homeless.

"We wus only 'sperimentin'," said "Mice" yesterday, as he kicked about in the ashes with his bare feet. — *Chicago Tribune*. March, '90.

* * *

HOTEL CLERK (suspiciously) — "Your bundle has come apart. May I ask what that queer thing is?"

Guest — "This is a new patent fire escape. I always carry it, so in case of fire I can let myself down from the hotel window. See?"

Clerk (thoughtfully) — "I see. Our terms for guests with fire escapes, sir, are invariably cash in advance." — *New York Weekly*.

* * *

THERE IS NO BETTER THING and no better practice as to corporate security in fire insurance than the old Philadelphia doctrine, "Small Stock Capital and large Net Surplus," embodying, as it has been described, "the maximum of Security with the minimum of Strain." — *American Exchange and Review*.

* * *

TRAMP — "Your barn was burned about two months ago, ma'am." *Farmer's wife* — "Yes." *Tramp* — "Well, a chum of mine set it on fire in order that you might get the insurance money, and he asked me to call around and see if you'd got it yet, and if you'd give him a few dollars of it." *Farmer's wife* — "You'll not get a cent of the insurance here." *Tramp* — "Very well, ma'am, but you mustn't feel hurt if my friend never sets any more of your buildings on fire." — *Epoch*.

* * *

IN EUROPE, says Murat Halstead, "the people live in villages that are as imperishable as the hills. The houses are of stone, roofed with tile, and generation after generation occupy them. They do not require repairs except at long intervals, and those frightful fire losses, the accounts of which occupy so much of our newspaper space, are rare. Our property burned every year would maintain the German army."

* * *

CARBOY — "Mr. Pipes, I believe there is gas escaping in my house. What shall I do to prove it?" *Pipes* (the plumber) — "Why don't you take a match and test the joints?" *Carboy* (in alarm) — "But it might explode and blow me up!" *Pipes* (coolly) — "Well, you wouldn't want any better proof than that, would you?"

* * *

NEW AGENT — "I understand that you are telling people that I don't know enough to write a policy."

Old agent (coldly) — "Nothing of the sort, sir. I'm not going 'round telling the public what I think."

* * *

IDA KLINE would probably make a no better agent than A. D. Seaver of the same place, but her name would sound safer in the average headquarters office.

A FLAT STORY. *Husband* — "Heavens! See, there is smoke coming up the dumb waiter. Run right down and tell Mrs. B—— that something is burning in her apartments."

Wife — "Indeed I won't. We have lived in this flat for nearly a year, and she has never called on me."

* * *

FATHER, may I a fireman be?"
 "Why, yes," replied the sire,
 "Go join yourself to Deluge 3,
 But never go near a fire."

* * *

IT MADE Coast underwriters frown
 To drain the costly cup,
 But when Seattle burned down,
 They had to settle up.

* * *

RATE CUTTING EXPLAINED

WELL, as ter rates, it's my idee —
 Stated in logickal terms —
 That a few cents more, seems ter me,
 Won't stop a risk's burnin' or be
 Very much help if it burns: —
 While if it don't, as likely not,
 You'll have the premium you got!

* * *

ANOTHER THING EXPLAINED

I HAVE no opinions to waive;
 Hold no theory,
 And as to those of those who have,
 They never suit me.

* * *

MUCH TALK is not the surest rule
 To prove your mental size;
 Remember that the silent fool
 Is oft thought otherwise.

* * *

THIS HOUSE FOR SAIL," the placard read,
 That on its front was nailed;
 A Kansas cyclone came along,
 And, sure enough, it sailed!

* * *

TIME AND TIDE" would make a good insurance agency firm in these days of expected credit and troublesome collections, for they "wait on no man."

A SONG OF THE UNATTAINABLE," copied below from *Cassell's Saturday Journal*, rather illustrates, with variations, the aspirations and spirit of a certain class of underwriters, who, overlooking or despising the present and the possible, fasten their far-away gaze on some future of their own fancy, which will force its satisfactory conditions, delightful opportunities and unexpected results upon them.

For the few-and-far-between,
 For the very-seldom-seen,
 For the un-catch-hold-uponable I sigh!
 The unclutchable I'd clutch,
 The untouchable I'd touch,
 For the ungrabbed and ungrabbable I'd die!
 Oh, I burn and sigh and gasp
 For the just-beyond-the-grasp,
 For the far-unovertakable I yearn;
 And the vulgar here-and-now
 I ignore and disavow,
 And the good-enough-for-others, how I spurn!
 Oh, I moan and cry and screech
 For the just-beyond-the-reach,
 The too-far-away-to-grab I would ensnare;
 The ungainable I'd gain,
 The unattainable attain,
 And chase the un-catch-onto to its lair.

* * *

IN ADDING A NEW ITEM to, or in the increase of insurance by endorsement on an existing policy, *short rates* should be charged for the term to expiration of the policy; for it is exactly what would be charged for the same term if a new policy were written. The fact that it is added to a policy already written, and having been for a more or less time in force, does not warrant the practice, which is common, of charging a *pro rata* rate.

The same is true of partial cancellations by the assured; *short rates* should be charged for the time the portion canceled has run.

In case of cancellation of a policy, when a new one for the same or a larger amount is to be written, a cancellation at *pro rata* rates would be the proper thing.

Agents are apt to confound the two cases, which it will be readily understood are not at all alike.

Short rates are simply equitable computations for periods short of the usual time for which policies are commonly written and for which basis or term rates are made. They should be charged in all cases of insurance continuing for such "short" time, except in case of cancellation on the company's part, as provided in the policy.

* * *

I HAVE PAID OUT HUNDREDS of dollars for fire insurance and I have never received a dollar in return," writes an old patron of the GLENS FALLS; and how often we hear similar expressions, indicating on the part of insurers a misconception of the value of insurance.

We would say to our friend that the most considerable and continuous benefit of fire insurance is the fact that it brings a certain compensation every day during all the time the policy runs. It relieves

the mind from a burden of care and anxiety as to an existing certain danger to your property, which, do your very best, you cannot eliminate and cannot otherwise so well provide against.

You do not insure expecting a fire, but you know there may be a moment of carelessness, or unavoidable accident on your part, or on the part of some one of your family, or help; some unobserved weakness in your stove pipes or chimneys; the possible act of some tramp or incendiary; perhaps a lightning stroke which might, in a single hour, cost you the value of your buildings and their contents.

You want insurance to provide against such loss when it comes, and also for the sense of security it gives you all the time — that you may lie down at night, or go on a journey and feel that none of the hundred chances of fire will wholly wipe out the money value of your buildings and the property stored therein; and this consideration is, after all, the luxury of insurance.

It is a luxury, and a cheap one, and although you never had a fire, and do not expect one, it brings you what money seldom buys — peace of mind and relief from an important anxiety.

File away your expired policies with your receipted grocery, clothing, butcher and other bills, as vouchers for the best value received of them all.

* * *

SOME pay as they go and others have to pay when they move in.

* * *

THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL BOARD, in his last annual address, says that at the time of his address in 1866 "the names of 592 Stock Companies were given which had failed or retired since 1860. Eighty-seven more must now be added to that number, making six hundred and seventy-nine. These companies represented capital amounting to \$91,961,651, and assets of not less than \$147,276,845, all of which was either lost in the business or withdrawn from it as not yielding a sufficient return upon the investment."

The above astonishing aggregate is an item of loss which does not enter into the usual statements pretending to give the profit or loss in the business of fire insurance, and shows how misleading such computations are when confined to the figures of surviving companies only. A statement of the results of fire insurance confined to the records of living companies only, would be very like health statistics which take no account of the graveyards. — *July, '90.*

* * *

AMONG THE ITEMS in the proof of a small loss sent us by one of our agents was \$9.50 for taking down and rebuilding a chimney to repair a defect which had caused a damage to surrounding woodwork of some \$4.50. Of course it was no part of the indemnity to repair a defect which was discovered by the fire. If the assured would not repair the defect himself the policy should have been canceled.

In another case a claim was made, amounting to about \$30, more than two-thirds of which was for a kerosene chandelier which had fallen while being lighted. The entire damage to the chandelier was caused by the fall and not by the quickly extinguished fire that followed.

We often have claims for damage from explosion of kerosene lamps, wherein the lamp, which was destroyed by the explosion, has been charged for, and, in one case, the only item was the price of a gasoline stove destroyed by an explosion, which, fortunately, was not followed by any fire damage. These are small matters, but will serve as reminders of the tendency to enlarge one side of the insurance contract.

— July, '90.

* * *

WE ARE OFTEN ASKED how to write a policy which shall include a builder's risk and protect both the owner and contractor in cases when by advances and payments made to the contractor the respective interests of owner and builder are changing from time to time. It can be done by writing a policy in names of both and adding this clause: "*This policy is issued to John Smith as owner and James Jones as builder, and loss, if any, is payable to each as their respective interests may appear.*" The better way, however, is to issue a policy to the owner for a term at the regular rate, add a builder's clause at the regular extra charge and make "*loss, if any, payable to James Jones as contractor and builder of said insured building as his interest may appear.*" The contractor should pay for the builder's risk, and he will be protected while he has an interest in the building, and the policy remains wholly good to the owner when the builder's interest ceases, without further endorsement. This protects all around, saves writing a second policy to the owner and fairly divides the cost of the insurance during the construction.

In insuring a contractor direct, always add the clause, "*This insurance is to cover said insured's interest as builder, under contract, in the insured building.*" Otherwise, he not being the owner of building or land, the policy conditions might make the insurance void.

* * *

IT IS JUST AS NEEDFUL to send the company full and complete copies of all endorsements as of the policies themselves. They change or modify the contract, and we need a full and true copy of the contract for our record, always.

* * *

MISS ETHEL — "Just see the water dropping from that dizzy height — sprinkling down so lovely in the sunlight. How exquisitely beau—"

Her Insurance Broker Companion — "Just so — but that's nothing to the way rates drop when we get a risk sprinkled — but, beg pardon, I interrupted you."

* * *

CULTIVATE THE HABIT of making a practice of taking notice of what you observe.

A FIRE was discovered on Zoo street yesterday morning which might have proved serious but for the early and efficient service of the fire department of the near by Zoological Gardens. This is a snapshot of the Zoo department at work.

* * *

THOROUGHLY EXAMINE STOVEPIPES, CHIMNEYS and all heating arrangements, for no rate will prevent or prove adequate to meet fires caused by common defects in these things. The scrutiny of an underwriter, who from his reading and his experience knows where to find these defects, is required in order to save his companies from such losses.

An esteemed agent, after carefully inspecting a dwelling risk last summer, found a defect in a kitchen chimney and declined to insure the property until repairs were made. A competing agent — one of the kind who never makes internal inspections — shortly afterward issued a policy on the dwelling and contents, even after being told the reason why agent No. 1 declined it. Agent No. 2 said agent No. 1 was an "old granny." A fire, originating from this same defect, proved that the "old granny" knew enough to save his company a \$3,000 loss.

Agents who faithfully inspect, carefully estimate values, who are sure of the good character of the insured and positively exercise the almost intuitive prerequisites to the acceptance of a risk, never have runs of "bad luck" as to losses. It is enough to insure against *possible* fires without taking on those that are *probable*. Of course accidents will happen — if not prevented. Inspection will often prevent your being directly interested in them. — *July, '90.*

* * *

ARE BUILDINGS OCCUPIED BY TENANTS really more hazardous than those occupied by owners? As a rule they certainly are.

Usually, tenancy is temporary and transient, and there is not the care or interest in the property that comes from ownership or an abiding occupancy. Tenants are not inclined to give quick attention to discovered defects or those occasioned by ordinary wear and tear or accident in heating or lighting arrangements, or to the remedying of danger points. The tenant waits for the landlord to do such repairs, if indeed he does not improvise some temporary makeshift which will itself increase the danger of fire. "I don't own the building," is the mental excuse for much that is negligent, slovenly and dangerous. The landlord himself is less ready and prompt to keep everything snug and safe about his tenant property than he is in case of buildings occu-



pied by himself. There is a sacredness about the home, owned and occupied as such, which, as a rule, permits no continuance of misfitting stovepipes, cracked or crumbling chimneys, stovepipes through roofs or sides of summer kitchens, and the dozens of similar characteristics common to a certain class of tenant property. There are cases of tenants who are better caretakers of rented property than are some owners of their own, but for reasons which might be multiplied the rule is that the fire hazard is less in owner-occupied property.

— July, '90.

* * *

SPRINKLER EQUIPMENTS vary greatly in their efficiency, but the widest difference exists between the *complete* equipment to reduce the fire hazard and the *so-called* equipment to reduce the rate. Strangely enough, both kinds seem to be successful.

* * *

LOTS OF men would be forgotten were it not for their debts.

* * *

A LIBERAL insurance education is not so called because it hasn't cost some company more or less.

* * *

IN WRITING LOSS PAYABLE CLAUSES, always name the payee and specify distinctly the nature of the interest he represents, as "*to James Smith as mortgagee, as his interest shall appear*"; or "*to John Jones as contractor and builder of the insured dwelling, as his interest shall appear*"; or "*to assured, as his interest shall appear, for benefit of Henry Williams as purchaser of said property under contract*"; or, if policy is issued in name of a purchaser by contract "*to George Johnson, from whom assured has contract for deed, as his interest shall appear*."

Never make a loss payable clause in the name of two or more parties having separate and distinct interests, without naming the *order* of the payment, as, in case of first and second mortgagees, "*first payable*," etc., and "*secondly payable*," etc. Never use the words "or assigns" in such a clause, for the policy must show to *whom*, by name, loss is payable.

Adjustment can be relieved of many difficulties and complications by carefully written contracts.

* * *

IF A CHEAP GET-BUSINESS COMPANY plants an agency in your field, do not weaken your own agency by getting a similar company yourself; or, if you do, do not claim for the reckless company the merit and excellence which you know belongs to the more conservative and solid companies of your office. Set forth the facts so that your patrons may take the cheaper policy and poorer indemnity at their peril. You will do yourself, your sound companies, the insurer and the business an injustice when you make special efforts to secure business for a company that is recklessly liberal in rates or carelessly indif-

ferent as to forms and practice. There is too much yielding to the "tricks" of competition and too little common sense resistance to them to make the wide difference that really does exist between intelligent and reckless underwriting apparent to the naked eye of the public.

* * *

IF YOUR TERRITORY IS AFFLICTED with some new agency apostle of bad underwriting, do not adopt his methods. If vicious forms are proposed do not copy them or add to their viciousness. If inadequate rates are offered do not drop to or below them, and while approving him advertise yourself as having heretofore treated your patrons unfairly. There are always good arguments for good practice; use them, and protest, pronouncedly, against what you know to be wrong and unreasonable. Give insurers your professional opinion of these things and let them take the responsibility; do not take it yourself.

* * *

WE RECEIVE ENDORSEMENTS intended to wholly transfer insurance on personal to cover in a new location, which by defective wording leave the insurance covering in both the old and new. Never forget to add to such endorsement, "*the insurance by this policy to cease in former location,*" or, write the endorsement as follows: "*The entire insurance by this policy is hereby made to cover the insured property while contained in the brick, slate roof dwelling, now occupied by assured and situate,*" or "*The property described in this policy having been removed to (describe location), the insurance by this policy is hereby wholly transferred to cover same while contained therein.*" While it is not often that in such cases any portion of the insured property remains in the old location, still it is always best to make endorsements clearly express their intent.

* * *

THERE ARE more uncomfortable competitors than such as get so mad that they can't speak.

* * *

FIRE INSURANCE is a doughnut which is divided up for losses and expenses, leaving the hole for the companies.

* * *

THE AGGREGATE of fire insurance statistics may be startling,

but the figures of the drink habit are positively staggering.

* * *

SOME AGENTS think that to hold their patrons they must not only treat them well, but often.

* * *

PROFESSING to be underwriters does not make underwriting a profession.

* * *

WE REMEMBER THE SUGGESTION which we heard some years ago, that the question of rates was a more venerable one than generally supposed, that there was record of its disturbing character as far-anciently as Shakespeare's time and that it was the cause

of the notable disturbance between Messrs. Antonio and Shylock, so thoroughly written up by the Bard of Avon.

“Signor Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have *rated* me,”

was Mr. Shylock's complaint against the chairman of the rating committee of the Venetian local board.

It is evident from the story that old “Shy's” anger was greatly aggravated by rating discriminations against him on account of his nationality and the moral hazard which, somehow, it even *then* implied. The comforting reflection, however, which comes to us moderns from this ancient controversy is that the gracious influences of civilization, through all the years since then, have so greatly modified the asperities of the business. Now, revenge in such cases is sought in *cutting rates* — then, it reached the bloody desperation of *cutting the rater*!

* * *

PRINTED FORMS ARE A LABOR-SAVING convenience, more and more used, and have some advantages, especially that of securing concurrency. We have observed, however, much carelessness in their use, especially where the form includes several items, or clauses, only a part of which are intended to be included in the contract. Be sure and write the word “Nothing” in the blank for the amount of insurance on any item not to be covered by the policy, or, what is better, draw a line through all the wording of a printed form which is not to be a part of the contract.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING “JINGLE” is offered as a sort of low-rated *false*lto obligato to the serious everyday song of the Get-Business singers of our insurance Israel:

’Tis hardly worth the life we live
And all the energy we give,
Just to milk a barren heifer in a sieve.

* * *

WHEN YOU NEED SUPPLIES of any kind, please order them, for this office has no plan for knowing when supplies are “short” or “out” at any agency. Use our supply order blank in ordering and if you do not receive the supplies within a reasonable time, you may conclude that there is a miscarriage somewhere and repeat your order. We often receive orders for supplies unsigned, and from which “no feller” could guess from whom or where they came.

* * *

YES SIR,” SAID THE OLD FARMER, leaning over a dilapidated fence by the roadside, “the old farm is rather deserted and run down. Boys gone and left it; girls married and away; live stock scarce, crops small and I’m gettin’ short of days’ works myself — *but*, when ev’rything else forsakes the old humstead there is one industrious night and day, Sunday-and-all worker, that’ll stick by with continued interest — and that’s the morgidge.”

YOUNG AGENT at *Local Agents' convention*—"There goes your competitor and his wife. He is to speak at the afternoon session and I am told that he talks well on insurance topics."

Older Agent—"I never heard him."

Young Agent—"Why, I supposed you had often—"

Older Agent—"Yes, but I never heard him talk well."

* * *

SINCE THE WRITING OF THE ITEMS herein on subject of vacancy and nonoccupancy, we find the following incident in the *Coast Review*:

During the absence of a California Congressman in Washington, burglars entered his house in Eureka and continued to live there during the winter, and did not vacate until they saw the announcement of the expected return of the family by the next steamer. They ate all the preserved fruits, wore out the congressman's linen and came and went at their own sweet will.

It is to the credit of these "tenants at will" that they did not fire the premises and thus consume the evidence of their "occupancy." The *Coast Review* submits the question "Was the house vacant within the meaning of the policy?"

* * *

THAT SIGNS SOMETIMES FAIL was rather pathetically demonstrated in the finding among the recent fire ruins of a Western hotel an iron sign from which, when a little rubbed up, the following could be made out: "This Hotel is Absolutely Fireproof."

* * *

AT A CHANCE NIGHT HOTEL GATHERING of a few special agents in one of the railway center cities of New York, a glib young special monopolized most of the time in relating a few real and a good many imaginary and suspected infidelities and inconsistencies of companies, managers, agents, boards, ratings, etc., altogether disparaging to the integrity, honor and common sense of the business.

As they were about to separate, our young friend turned to an older special, who had been smoking in silence and listening with evident disgust, with the remark:

"I don't believe that one-half the tricks and underhanded practices of insurance competition are generally known."

"Well," said the senior, rising to retire, "I am sure you can't kick yourself for being to blame for any ignorance there may be in that regard."

The young man lay awake a long time that night, wondering whether that remark was intended to be complimentary or otherwise!



IT IS A FUNNY FACT, but one well known in insurance offices, that every town having anything in that line at all, claims to have the best fire department and most efficient waterworks. We think, however, that the local agent of a certain Pennsylvania village undertook too much in this line when he entered his "brag" against facts in physical science.

He was escorting a visiting special agent about town, and in discoursing on the favorable fire insurance points of the place, boasted vigorously of its new stand-pipe system of waterworks. Pointing to the stand-pipe which gave the pressure, he said: "See that tower there? Well, sir, its regular pressure will throw two two-inch streams from twenty to thirty feet right over that tower!"

It is usually ambition and not water that so greatly overleaps itself.

* * *

OUR NEW OFFICE BUILDING is growing "according to contract" and is now quite ready for its roof. Despite the network of staging which surrounds it, its outlines and proportions are visible and much admired.

The gable above the arched main entrance already displays the company's trade mark, "Under the Arch," with the legend "Old and Tried" above it — well executed in terra cotta by the Glens Falls Terra Cotta Company.

The structure is therefore thus early sealed with the company's seal and bears its coat of arms.

One of these days **NOW AND THEN** will give you illustrations of the building and its surroundings. — *July, '90.*

* * *

HE TRIED TO "CATCH ON" AND BE SOCIABLE. — **HE** was Mr. Rebate, an insurance man from the West visiting the "Hub," who in calling at the office of an insurance friend during lunch time, found that the friend and most of his assistants were out. **SHE** was Miss Kilby, the stenographer of the office, who was *in*, and tried to entertain the caller while he waited. **HE** tried to be social himself, as will appear from the following phonographic record of the concluding portions of their conversation.

She — "Do you never, Mr. Rebate, feel a consuming desire to transcend the limitations and prohibitions which environ and hedge opportunity — a longing for enlarged freedom from scarcely definable conventional compacts —"

He (brightening up a little) — "Yes'm, compacts and boards do ruther prevent free —"

She (oblivious of interruption) — "Compacts which abnormally circumscribe our instinctiveness; a sort of intangible withinness yearning for larger lines —"

He. "The larger the lines of course the larger the commis —"

She (slightly disturbed) — "Larger lines of *permission*, privilege —"

He. "Vacancies, repairs and sich —"

She (more disturbed) — "Privilege and *prerogative*, Sir — until there is an insatiable craving for the unutterable as some departing risk —"

He — "You bet. When Cutter got away with the whole of Hogg's pork house, which I had written for years, my stock of cuss words was too limited for —"

She (*broke up*) — "I am not talking shop, sir, even if I *am* compelled to earn my subsistence by giving grammatical form, correct orthography and approved Bostonese in type-written revisions of the dictated correspondence of this office. This is my lunch hour, sir, when I would lift my intellectuality above your interruptive suggestions of my servitude."

This is all that the phonographic cylinder will intelligibly repeat, although it gives a "jumble" as if two were talking at the same time, with the occasional addition of another voice, suggesting that the waited-for "dictator" had returned and greeted his Western caller and something was said about drinks.

* * *

NIGHT WORK PROHIBITED. — *Insurance Agent* — "Glad you came in, Uncle 'Rastus — got a job for you. Want you to go 'round to my place this afternoon and clean out my hen-house."

Uncle 'Rastus (with a grin) — "Say, Boss, nebber done dat kind er job in broad daylight in all my life!"

Agent — "Well, I can't give you any night work privilege on that risk — altogether too hazardous."

'Rastus — "I done try it — done try it, Boss; but 'pears like going for persimmons Christmas time. Don't seem natural, nohow — 'round hen-house in daytime."

* * *

AN ACTIVE BAD AGENT can work decided unpleasantness in the field of his operation, but the days of the bad agent are few, both as to his companies and his patrons, and if the reliable agents in the same field do not give a sort of respectability to his ignorant or reckless rates and malpractice by following his lead, they will have less to reform and recover from when he has had his day.

It is hard to condemn such an agent by doing yourself the same unprofessional things he does. It is a poor sort of self-defence.

* * *

TO DISAGREE disagreeably is disagreeable.

* * *

INSURANCE economy as often practiced is buying a 30 cent kind for 49 cents when the price of the best is 50.

* * *

DECLINE TO INSURE ITINERANTS, Traveling Exhibition and Show property, Curiosities," etc., is a GLENS FALLS prohibition which is justified in the following incident from the *Insurance Monitor*:

There was lately a fire in a brick hotel, in a thriving town in the southern tier of counties of this State. The companies concerned in the hotel paid a 15 per cent. loss, but one of the companies of this city is called on to pay a total on a subject

which was regarded by the other companies as the cause of the fire. It appears that an itinerant showman came along and exhibited a marvelous mechanical clock in a vacant store in the hotel building. He induced a local agent to issue a policy on the clock and its appurtenances for a liberal amount for ten days. Before the ten days expired a fire broke out in the room and the wonderful clock was *irreparably damaged*. If it was not the cause of the fire, it was the cause of much swearing, and not all before a justice of the peace either.

* * *

THE GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY has since January 1, 1873, added nearly one and a half million dollars to its assets and nearly one million dollars to its net surplus. In the meantime it has paid a regular dividend of ten per cent. and one extra dividend of five per cent. More than that, it has during all this time increased the ready selling value of its capital stock more than thirteen per cent. per annum!

Our policy-holders have had the advantages of this growth in a constantly improved quality of indemnity, our agents the benefit of a company all the time growing stronger and our stockholders an increment not measured by dividends. Best of all, the company has in its careful regard for all concerned in it and by its honorable and conservative course through all the years of its growth, achieved a reputation peculiar to itself, which is a valuable accompaniment to its solid financial strength. — *July, '90.*

* * *

NO INSURANCE” seems a cold and pitiful mention with which to close a newspaper account of the burning of somebody’s home or store, or some church or public building. In these days of responsible companies and agencies, such concluding words in the record of a fire seem pointedly suggestive of delay, negligence and foolishness, and sound like “No sympathy.”

* * *

NOT ONLY IS IT IMPORTANT that a policy should be carefully written, but quite equally so that a complete and correct copy be entered upon the local register and reported to this office. Abbreviations and contractions of wording are often misleading and, anyhow, in contracts wherein a single word may be important in its construction, full copies are needful for the agency and home office records. “Household Furniture, etc.,” “Merchandise, etc.,” “Builder’s Privilege,” “Mortgagee Clause,” “Contents,” “Vacancy Clause,” “Lightning Clause,” “Commission Clause” and similar memoranda on a daily report are entirely too general, for, as to these matters, there are various forms and phraseology with their at least different shades of meaning. Enter on your register and send the company full and complete and exact copies of your contract, for sometimes policies are lost, and both agent and company ought to know exactly how their contracts read. Guessing from a brief memorandum is not safe.

It may do to refer to the company’s own printed form of this or that clause, but it will be less trouble and better to attach the printed form itself. — *July, '90.*

AN AGENT ought to so live that there will be others at his funeral than those who wish to succeed to his agency.

* * *

HE "WORKED" insurance now and then,
But, happy to relate,
It secured for him a steady job
Of working for the State.

* * *

A YOUNG SPECIAL AGENT on his first trip encountered a setback from the Lord-in-Waiting of a city hotel, in this wise:

Young Special (registering). "I represent the Blank Insurance Company as special agent, and, sir, I want a good room at commercial rates. If I am treated well I shall patronize this hotel in future, otherwise I shall not."

Room Clerk—"All right, sir. Front! Show this young man to No. 13, and show him how to turn off the gas."

* * *

THE RELATION of agent with most companies is that of accomplice with some.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING QUOTATION from a correspondent of the *Occasional* is worth repeating:

Cranks and grumblers are always out of place in the field of agency underwriting. It requires a happy frame of mind to carry on successfully agency operations, while the peevishly disposed are always in hot water.

* * *

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENCE it appears that agents are often troubled to know just how to write policies to cover mixed title and interests in property — such cases as a life interest in one and fee simple in another; a present ownership contingent upon certain things or events; fractional and unequal interest in heirs and others; reversionary, remainder, succession and other interests.

Of course there are cases of this kind so "mixed" that it is best to let them alone — cases in litigation or where resort to the courts may be needful to effect an adjustment.

However, the simplest and best way to issue a policy in such cases is to write it in the names of all the parties in interest, with a plain statement in the contract of the nature and quality of the interest of each individual or class, and make "loss, if any, payable to each as their respective interests shall then appear."

In insuring joint or several heirs, issue the policy in their individual names. Especially as to real property insurance, "Estate of John Smith, deceased," or "Heirs of John Brown, deceased," is not good form; give



the names of the heirs. Remember that the GLENS FALLS does not insure mortgagees, judgment creditors or other lien-holders direct — that is, by policies in their names. Insure the owner with loss payable, etc.

Neither does this company like to insure partial interests — include all the parties interested in the subject of insurance, as above suggested. There is danger of overinsurance and other “frictions” in insuring separate individual parts of joint interests. — *July, '90.*

* * *

NATIVE AGENT — “Good morning, Fawcett, how are you?”
Anglo-native Agent — “Mornin', Chawles. Beastly nawsty weatha. Got a cold or something in me 'ead, Chawley.”

Native — “Something in your head? *Must* be a cold, Fawcett.”

Anglo-native — “Aw — yaas — think so meself.”

* * *

THE HAND GRENADE. — There is a gentleman, now a wealthy resident of Brooklyn, says the *Eagle* of that city, who made a small fortune out of the sale of hand grenades for extinguishing fires. I happened to be at his home one day and expressed my surprise that he did not have a hand grenade in the house to protect himself against fire. “I made money out of the hand grenades, but I think it was because they were never used in case of fire. Of course when I went into the business I thought they were all they were represented to be, and as soon as I found the fraud in them I sold out my interest. The hand grenade can no more put out a fire than will any amount of water equal to what it contains. The exhibitions of its efficacy, you will remember, were all made with burning structures with three sides. Had a board been taken out of the back of one of the boxes which the agent set fire to, all the hand grenades in the market would not have put it out. But, as there was no draft, and a great deal of blaze and smoke, but little water was required to extinguish the flames. I suppose millions of hand grenades of various makes have been sold and I doubt if the fraud has been discovered yet.” — *July, '90.*

* * *

FIRE INSURANCE IS A GREAT BUSINESS. — Considering the magnitude of its transactions, the multitude of its details, its relations to men and property of all sorts, the distance between its center and circumference and the fact that human nature has not yet reached the sublime altitude and pattern divinely set forth in the blessed Sermon on the Mount, fire insurance is not only a legitimate, indispensable and honorable business, but in view of all the difficulties by which it is environed and beset and notwithstanding all the reforms which can be suggested, it is intelligently and, above all, honestly conducted.

In all the world of business I know of none so universally connected with and involved in the “infinite variety of human concerns” — none so free from defalcation, wrongdoing or injustice. When I look back upon its history and behold what it has wrought; how it has saved and preserved trade, commerce and manufacture; how it has made credit possible and traffic safe; how it has rebuilt cities and turned the ashes of workmen's savings and rich men's fortunes into gold; how it has cheerfully met and faithfully redeemed its promises at the cost of billions; how reliantly it is leaned upon to-day by almost every phase of business and enterprise, I am proud of my humble relation to the business and feel honored in being with you, my business brethren, on this anniversary occasion. — *From Annual Address before the N. Y. State Association by a Glens Falls man. July, '90*

* * *

IT IS REPORTED that one convicted incendiary is so superstitious that he believes himself a victim of the unlucky number 13 — twelve jurors and a judge.

ALWAYS LIMIT PERMISSIONS to finish by a named term and expiration date. It is difficult to say when a building *is* finished — some never *are* finished. It is certainly needful to restrict by distinct time this and kindred privileges.

* * *

THE WEEPING woman claimant — wife or widow, maid, milliner, or other sort — comes often into the experience of adjusters of fire losses, to their discomfort and discomfiture. Most adjusters are “long” on gallantry, and the tears of the more or less comely lone feminine fire sufferer more or less swell the schedule footing and soak the company.

The diagram herewith is that of sorrow for the loss of a trousseau ten years old, renewed twice since with new prospects of use, but which, because of the fickleness and unsmooth course of the kind of love she had three times encountered, was never used and therefore “just as good as new.” The disappointments and other recollections revived by the “ashes of wedding garments never worn,” and, especially, by what seemed the present unresponsiveness of the “gentlemanly adjuster,” presented a combination which called for the “effective influence of silent tears and articulate sobs.”



* * *

A GREAT INVENTOR

HE made a new invention nearly every other week,
But something always ailed it, and it always seemed to shirk;
Its functional activity was somehow very weak,
Its whole vitality was low; the blamed thing wouldn't work.

He made perpetual motion things, but they would never move;
And then he made a big machine for flying through the sky,
But there was a slight obstruction in the piston-rod or groove,
And the only trouble with it was, he couldn't make it fly.

And he made marine toboggans for sliding on the sea,
A very pretty compromise of bicycle and boat;
And on the second trial trip he said, 'twas his idee
The thing would slide tremendously if he could make it float.

And then he fire insurance tried; his own new-fangled scheme
For writing risks that could not burn to any great extent.
It proved an incoherent, unsubstantial sort of dream,
For the *unexpected* fires found him ousted for his rent.

— *S. W. Foss in Yankee Blade, with additions by another "feller."*

* * *

OVERCRITICAL AND FAULT-FINDING underwriters are something like the librarian who, in recording the condition of a book, noted, “Page 47 — a hole,” and turning over the leaf, noted again, “Page 48 — another hole.”

MOST WELL REGULATED and well governed towns have municipal prohibitions against the storage of gunpowder, gasoline, naphtha, etc., beyond certain small quantities, within the corporate limits of the town. But we occasionally have to decline privileges submitted for storage and sale of such unusually large quantities of these dangerous things in the very business centers of good towns, as to make us wonder why these towns have failed to regulate this important matter. The first thought when these privileges came in, is that such towns being negligent in this respect may be also negligent in other important fire precautions.

The presence of such destructive forces in the midst of a town is a standing menace to its safety and a hindering peril to firemen when fire comes. Firemen, insurance men and property owners should see to it that ordinances limiting and regulating such storage and sale are adopted and enforced.

* * *

IT IS POSSIBLE for a woman to marry an underwriter, a good man, an honest fellow, all at the same time, and not commit bigamy.

* * *

ONE WHO settles fire losses ought to be just as just a man as any other — indeed “*a juster*.”

* * *

YES, our last fire did prove that our hose was full of holes; but our efficient firemen thoroughly ‘darned’ the holes at that time.”

* * *

IT MUST HAVE BEEN an inadvertence on the part of the agent, who, in filling out a “Notice of Loss” form, put his own name in the blank intended for “Cause of Fire.” It must have been a mistake, and so was the considerable overinsurance on the building, the loss of which he reported.

* * *

FLORENCE IS THE BRIGHT SIX-YEAR-OLD DARLING of a special agent whose duties keep him so much away from home that his little daughter wonders, sometimes, whether she has a papa or not.

“Mamma,” she asked one day, “if I should marry, will I have a husband like papa?”

“Yes, dear, I hope so,” replied the amused mother.

“If I don’t get married will I be an old maid like Aunt Jane?”

“Yes, I suppose so,” said the mother.

“Well,” said Florence, after a thoughtful pause, “ain’t this a pretty tough world for us women?”

* * *

JUDGE — “The prisoner denies having created any disturbance, as stated by you.”

Indignant Witness (a night watchman) — “But, your honor, if he didn’t raise the biggest kind of a disturbance, how did I come to wake up?” — *Texas Siftings*.

WHAT HAVE YOU TO ADVISE as to the use of the first stream at a fire?" was one of the questions found among others in a question hat at a firemen's convention. The presiding officer, a "chief" and a wag, replied as follows: "If there is a watchman on the premises, play on him *first*, so as to wake him up and get him interested."

* * *

IN SPEAKING of a certain agent one Special said to another: "His great failing is low rates." "Failing!" replied the other, "that is his great success."

* * *

WHEN WORRIES and troubles surround you,
Don't fret.

Go to work!

You will always have trouble around you,
You bet!

If you shirk.

The man who is busy his worry forgets,
His mind isn't harassed by thoughts of his debts,
And the harder he works the more happy he gets,
Till he's gay as a Turk.

— *Somerville Journal*.

* * *

IT IS MORE difficult for the average man to honor his religion in making up a claim for fire loss than it is to shout at a camp meeting.

* * *

WE OFTEN FORGET LITTLE matters when they are obscured by larger ones, and as much so in the direction of fire extinguishment as any other.

An enormous aggregate of water damage might be saved every year, by an organized bucket "skirmish line" for every fire "brigade."

The ambition for the *first* or an early stream at a fire ought not to be discouraged and yet the use of that first stream calls for coolness and discretion. Often that *first* stream has resulted in a needless but serious water damage to a whole stock of merchandise without reaching the fire at all.

But without being led into the tempting discussion of the "first stream" topic we want to make a plea for the old-fashioned, modest bucket, now so largely lost sight of behind the hydrant and the steamer. In a large number of cases it will be all that is needed, for with it the water can be put exactly where most needed and at once. Often it would be good management to make preliminary use of the bucket, even if it should, at first sight, seem foolishness, for surprising things in this line have been accomplished in villages dependent entirely upon buckets.

It would be a wise precaution if every building, not excepting dwellings, was provided with buckets, in number according to size of the building, placed near a provided water supply, *to be used only* in case of fire. Of course we all recognize the usefulness of filled buckets in large or specially hazardous establishments. A bucket of water in

time is worth more than a stream later. It would be still better, if every fire department had an auxiliary bucket service or organization, so distributed, instructed and equipped as to be first at a fire and the first to use water.

Those who have observed the much less proportional damage from water in Great Britain and on the continent than in the United States, have found a partial explanation in the use there of smaller nozzles, of hand engines for small fires (over one hundred now in use in London) and in *bucket organizations*.

Paris uses but a small quantity of water in extinguishment of its fires. Its chief first reliance is upon buckets, of which its fire department has more than 10,000. In 1878, buckets alone were used in extinguishing 697 fires out of a total of 923! — steam engines being employed only thirty-seven times.

So much for mere suggestion in a direction worthy of more attention than we can now give it, and which elaborated into practical organization has a great deal of salvage in it. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

A PRESS ASSOCIATION at one time sent instructions to its agents not to waste words in giving accounts of fires by noting how promptly the fire department responded and what excellent service it did; but, if the department refused to respond, or ran away from the fire, used kerosene instead of water, or if its members preferred playing seven-up in a neighboring saloon rather than do their duty, or any such unusual sort of thing, then mention it by all means.

So, too, there is nothing very "newsy" or unusual in an item or published certificate mentioning that some insurance company has done as it agreed and paid its insurance through its "gentlemanly adjuster," for do not all good companies pay their losses, and are they not represented by gentlemen?

* * *

A LARGE AND VALUABLE residence in Syracuse, N. Y., was recently wrecked by the ignorant or thoughtless use of benzine to destroy vermin. Considerable benzine was scattered about and sulphur was also burned. The benzine gas probably reached the burning sulphur, producing an explosion, followed by fire. The vermin were, of course, involved in the general destruction of this beautiful home. Such foolishness as this might possibly have been prevented if the fire insurance policies on the dwelling had been read *before* the disaster, instead of *afterward*; for there is a good deal of valuable loss-preventive suggestion, even in the prohibitory provisions of a fire insurance contract. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

DO NOT, FOR THIS COMPANY, include a policy fee in the consideration of a policy," is one of our items of instruction to agents. We are told that this forbidden thing is being done in some localities by some agents for some companies. In the first place it is wrong, in that it deceives the insured as to the premium cost of the

insurance given by the policy. Such a policy coming to the notice of a competing agent the overcharge is pointed out and the manner of it explained to the hurt of the agent who included the fee, unexplained, as premium. It is inadmissible, as we have before now stated, because the law requires that a company's unearned premium liability shall be computed upon the face consideration of each of its unexpired policies; a computation which must be sworn to in reports to the State Department. Therefore, if a policy fee is included in the consideration of a policy, it must be treated as the premium thereon. But if the company has report only of the premium accounted for by the agent, the statement of unearned premium liability, as to such policies, will be false in not including the actual consideration named in those policies. Again, in any cancellation of such a policy the return premium must be figured upon the *consideration* expressed in the policy, so that the unearned proportion of the included so-called policy fee must be returned same as of the so-called actual premium. Besides these very serious reasons why this must not be practiced, is the fact that it is demoralizing, as every wrong thing is. Some agents may think (some have so thought) that if the usual policy fee may be so included, why not include a larger fee — why not get the largest rate possible to collect and report as low a rate as the company can be persuaded to accept and call the difference a policy fee?

Dishonorable and dishonest as this sort of thing is, both to company and insured, it has been done and we have in mind the case of another company finding that as large a sum as \$7.50 had been so withheld from single premiums, and that something over \$200 was collected from that agent on account of this sort of embezzlement.

A survey and policy fee is a legitimate charge and never ought to have been so much lost as it is in the competition which prevails. But when it is collected, it should be collected as such, openly and manly, and entered upon the filing fold of the policy.

Anyhow, this company must insist, if there be any need of such insisting, that the full consideration named in any of its policies be accounted for as premium. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

A VERY WISE MAN, in his own estimation, recently refused to accept a policy on his dwelling unless the words "including foundation" were erased; "for," said he, "in case of a fire the foundations cannot be hurt much and the company will appraise them at a high figure and take it out of the insurance and thus leave a smaller amount to pay. I know a thing or two myself, and you can't fool me with that clause." The wise man was accommodated by striking out the obnoxious clause.

He evidently had about the same notion a certain other wise man had of the method of settling fire losses. "As I understand it," he explained, "if everything is burned up they pay the amount of the policy. If anything is saved, it is appraised and the amount deducted from the amount of the policy and the balance, if any, is paid to the policy holder."

AN AGENT failed to keep his Balance (paid) and Fell into Liquidation. In his Desperation he Solicited the End of a large Line which a Broker had to Place. The Big hearted Broker gave this Agent the Whole line. The Agent, however, was Sorry that the Broker did not Hold on to one End of it!

Some Agents are Never satisfied.

* * *



IN THESE DAYS OF COMPETITION and rivalry and ambition for large incomes in our business, we find even intelligent underwriters calculating the lowest possible rate at which they think classes of risks can be written, and not only accepting risks on that basis, but indulging in “flyers” at

rates which they know are well below what experience teaches to be the cost of the indemnity, and doing it on a trust-to-luck sort of basis. If intelligent underwriters are doing this, what may not others do?—and with most of a company’s business at just as low rates as are regarded possible and a good deal at much below the “remunerative,” what will the result be? Cornelius Walford, in commenting upon the claimed ability of American underwriters to get from obtainable statistics, classifications, etc., a close approximate cost of carrying leading classes of property, said he regarded the power of estimating the value of a risk down to the very lowest cent as a power to be used judiciously. If a company is placed upon the very brink of safety, if the last cent or last few cents of premium be computed away from or against the company, where is the provision for errors of opinion, for the accidents and the “great judgments of fire” which the burning construction incident to this rapidly growing country warrants expectation?

A few cents more or less of rate on any one risk will not cause it to burn or keep it from burning; but a few cents more or less of rate on each of a great number of risks makes the difference between profit and loss and after a while settles the question of the company’s solvency and the value of the indemnity covered by its policies.

This pushing for business along the margin of safety in rates recalls the story of the three coachmen seeking employment. One would dare to drive within ten feet of the edge of a precipice, another would venture within five feet, while the third would keep as far from a dangerous line as possible, and he secured the position.

The sound and safe underwriter will have in mind the multitude of uncertainties in the business and keep as far from a dangerous margin of compensation as possible. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

THE BURNING OFF OLD PAINT — that is, making it soft with a spirit lamp or gas jet so it can be more easily scraped off for a

fresh coat — is dangerous. It occasioned a \$100,000 fire at Rockland, Mass., recently. The GLENS FALLS paid for a valuable dwelling on Staten Island, the fire originating from the flame of a spirit lamp used in softening the paint on the clapboarding outside. By a draft upwards through the studding the flame was drawn in between the clapboards, starting a fire which after burning some time unnoticed, broke out through the roof and destroyed the dwelling. It is a common practice with painters and a bad one.

* * *

LIGHTNING STRUCK THE GABLE of a frame store building in Essex County, N. Y., and in passing to the earth it perforated and melted the solder of a tea canister which stood *only two inches from a tin can containing ten pounds of gunpowder!* It was thoughtful of the subtle fluid to avoid the resentment which it would have occasioned by striking the can of powder. — Nov. '90.

* * *

THERE HAS BEEN A RAPID GROWTH in the number of little bits of claims for damages by fire; claims which companies never heard of years ago; damages, which insurance was never intended to cover. Such cases as garments igniting by falling on stoves too near which they have been carelessly left; sparks falling upon rugs and carpets; clothing laid off at night so near a stove pipe as to get scorched; lace lamp shades fired in lighting the lamp; little damages in store windows from foolish arrangement of lights or in dressing windows by artificial lights, etc.

There have been cases of claims for overcoats burned while on a person because of his standing too near a hot stove; a vest ignited by putting a lighted pipe in its pocket; a baking of bread burned in an overheated oven; damage from a smoking chimney or lamp; a valuable embroidered dress spoiled by an overheated laundry iron, and others in that line.

Every insurance office knows, if it has been thought of, that all this sort of thing has increased to an extent which involves a very pretentious aggregate every year.

Once in a while, too, a letter will come from an agent noting some such damage, just made known to him as he was looking after the *renewal* of the insurance, but which occurred, perhaps, a year or more before, and which, sometimes, amounts to just about the premium on the renewal. In such a case, as well as in some others, the claim has the look of being "assisted" by the agent as a favor which the assured is expected to appreciate.

Every legitimate claim should be honestly met, however small it may be; but there is a class of small damages caused by such stupidity and carelessness as not to be meritorious, or occasioned by such use of fire as would make a claim for a burned out stove equally as reasonable.

This class of claims does not pertain to the mission of insurance and should not be hunted up or encouraged when presented.

Insurance is really a system of little things, and it is this multitude of small matters that must have attention if the great things of its purpose are made sure. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

A GENTS, HOWEVER COMPETENT TO ADJUST, prefer that their companies attend to the adjustment of losses, and companies prefer to do so. However, there are many small damages which will have to be referred to the agent for settlement. Often these settlements are offhand, guesswork settlements and made the opportunity of a cheap advertisement of liberality and promptness. Being small matters anyway, they seem hardly worth personal investigation, and perhaps the claimant's own figures are at once accepted with much show of confidence in him and of indifference for such small things.

It is our notion that every such loss should have at least the appearance of careful effort to reach the exact damage for which the company is liable, and the distinct evidence of a purpose to do just as near exactly right as possible, even if the insured is given the benefit of every doubt.

It is an unpleasant impression for any property owner to get from the settlement of even small claims, that such matters are not investigated and carefully arrived at and that even had a larger claim been made it would have been paid. There is still more unpleasantness in the education which comes from the fact that the little damage has been overpaid and that such small accidents are profitable.

Every damage should have deliberate treatment and a fair adjustment according to its real and actual measure, to the end that fire insurance may be esteemed a dignified and not a "give-away" business — a business having rules and methods which apply to all claims, and meaning fairness, honesty and attainable exactness, whether the amount be \$5 or \$5,000. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

A N AGENT EXPLAINS the return of a surrendered policy in the following paradoxical manner: "Policy No. — inclosed. I *cancel* because I *can't sell* at the price another agent *can sell*."

* * *

SAYS THE Lewiston (Me.) *Journal*: "Many a person's conception of what it means to lean on Providence is as hazy as that of the woman who called on a local insurance agent the other day to inquire about insuring her house. 'Ye see, 'square,' she said, 'we haven't had it insured for some time. We've been kinder trustin' in the Lord for better'n seven year, but to my mind in these times it's ter'ble risky.'"

* * *

Q UITE A NUMBER of mutual fire insurance companies have ripened recently into rottenness.

* * *

I S HE FREE FROM LITIGATION and financial embarrassment?" is an important daily report inquiry and it is equally important that the answer should be correctly given.

Financial stress breeds demoralization, often unhinging the best of moral character. What any man will do, or may not do, whose business is going to pieces or whose possessions are sliding toward his creditors for the want of ready cash, cannot always be even guessed at. We know that it has made suicides, forgers and frauds out of men of previous good reputation, and it requires less pressure to make incendiaries of their own property when the crime will convert property into cash, no matter if it be at a sacrifice. It is a dangerous thing for a man driven to an extremity for money to tide over a crisis in his financial affairs, to ponder on the promises of fire insurance, which he knows are as good as gold if fire should destroy property which he would gladly sell if he could. There are men, lots of them, who would not do a wrong thing to save their fortune; but just who could stand such a test is not easily determined, when it often induces insanity itself.

Litigation may be a result of financial embarrassment, and often the visible sign of it, but there are litigious persons, happiest when fighting out some dispute or quarrel in the courts. Such persons may or may not be involved in financial trouble, but they have enemies liable to be bitter and vindictive, and who knows in what direction their nursed wrath may vent itself?

It is a fact, too, that the man with enemies is the one who seeks the largest insurance, and sometimes these enemies intending injury do a favor. Anyhow, fires can be charged to them.

A good deal could be said in this line, but these hints will tend to prove the statement with which we started. Let the risks of such owners alone and drop them when the conditions appear.

* * *

HOLY SMOKE" is not swearing, but a really mild and appropriate exclamation when you see a church on fire.

* * *

AN INSURANCE critic is one who exaggerates the faults of the business, ignores its virtues and is irritated by both.

* * *

A GOOD MANY invest in stocks which they know nothing about for fear they will rise in price before they can find out.

* * *

THE ART of getting used to things is a soother of competitive irritation.

* * *

THE FEAR of fear is a decent sort of cowardice.

* * *

ALL MEN are born equal, but

the equality begins to differentiate with the first meal.

* * *

ANTIPATHY grows to be too dangerous and expensive to maintain all through life.

* * *

THERE ARE laws that influence finance and finance that influences laws.

* * *

SINS of omission are not merely those we forget to commit.

* * *

FACE the sun and your shadow will be behind you.

* * *

INABILITY to get credit has compelled prosperity.

DID YOU READ my article on the 'Historical Sequence of Conflagrations,' Mr. Hazard?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, Mr. Scribbler, I haven't read it yet."

"Why, when I gave you a copy you assured me you would lose no time in reading it."

"Candidly, Mr. Scribbler, I meant what I said, and have lost no time reading it."

* * *

AGENTS SHOULD NEVER NEGLECT collections and incur the danger of having a good deal outstanding and a finally forced neglect of other matters, in order to gather in what is due under pressure. Some one has said that "collecting is an art," but the art is in keeping at it concurrently with the other work of the office. "Short settlements make long friendships," you will find particularly true in the insurance business, for somehow the average insurer takes more pleasure in paying for a policy just written than for one which has expired or nearly so. There is a failure to recognize the fact that there is as good value received represented by an expired policy as by a receipted grocer's or butcher's bill.

Don't delay collections until your patrons feel that they are paying for "dead horses." Most men respect promptness, even in this direction, and any accumulation of neglected collections is a burden to any agency.

* * *

ONCE MORE ON THE SUBJECT of prompt monthly reports. Some few of our agents do not seem to understand the need this office has of prompt reports from every agency every month. A monthly report has to be rendered to our directors, covering the company's entire business, and to do this every agency must be heard from.

Please, again, take notice that we are greatly inconvenienced by the few reports which we do not get in time, and have to write or telegraph for. Don't wait for remittances, but with close of month make report and let remittances follow. Other companies in your agency may not have the same reasons for needing reports as promptly as the GLENS FALLS does, so whatever their requirements in this regard may be, remember that prompt reports are needful here.

* * *

ONE OF THE LITTLE EVILS of credit in fire insurance is the trick of holding a policy as long as possible, and until the premium must be paid, and then refusing to keep the insurance and refusing to pay for the time in force. By a three months' delay in payment and by having four agencies to practice this meanness upon, a full year's insurance is secured. Anyhow, the insurance is had for nothing, so long as it may have run. Various excuses are offered for surrendering policies to this end — pretended offer of lower rates, feigned dislike of the company, assumed anger with the agent for insisting upon payment, inability to pay, etc. Don't let this sort of scheme succeed by delayed collections or otherwise.

THERE IS NO BODY OF MEN organized for and devoted to public service more deserving of praise and honor than firemen.

In times of war and its expected or certain stern demand and unequalled terrors, the soldier, marching to deadly conflict or returning from the bloody field, must ever receive the heartiest meed of praise and gratitude. But next to those who imperil their lives for their country and the equal of all other conservators of life and property, stand the firemen, pledged to instant duty, involving hardship, exposure and often death itself, whenever the sudden signal sounds the presence of a ruthless and consuming enemy.

Who can witness firemen responding to an alarm rushing through the streets, with the speed of running horses, gongs muttering impatience at the hindering crowd of traffic and commerce, smoke rolling out from the quick fire and steam already hissing defiance; these earnest, hardy, resolute men, ready to spring from their firm seats upon the foe when his intrenchments shall be reached — who can see this without experiencing the same sense of admiration and appreciation which a soldier feels when some battery of artillery has thundered into a hotly contested battle just in time to save the day?

All honor to the firemen who stand between the lives and property of citizens and a subtle and relentless enemy. They have won grandly, nobly and dearly wrought victories and oftener strangled the "fiend" on the very line of his invasion.

There is certainly danger enough to make the fireman's service heroic and in the sphere of duty it is hallowed by the highest human motives.

* * *

THERE IS EVIDENTLY less and less of agency inspection of risks as the years go by. It is not so very many years ago that it was expected that the agent would make an internal and external inspection of a building before it was insured. There were so many little things which an agent of reading and experience could suggest by way of improvement in heating, lighting and other matters, that owners felt favored by a thorough look-over of their premises by an insurance man. We remember just now the case of a refusal on the part of an excellent old agent to insure a neighbor's dwelling because of a defective stove pipe connection in the attic. Another agent readily wrote the risk without inspection and the building was in ashes within three months, the fire originating from the defect discovered by our agent. Our agent saved us \$2,750. He lost his commission on this risk, but for years afterward wrote every dollar of insurance carried by the owner of the burned dwelling (and he owned many buildings), for the reason that had he followed our agent's advice he would not have suffered a fire involving a loss of \$1,000 more than his insurance.

Edward Atkinson, in his able "Prevention of Loss by Fire," says, among other things:

"I think more than one half of the fires originate from causes of danger which are only tolerated or overlooked because they are customary. For instance, no prudent man would permit a swinging gas jet to remain under such conditions that by a swing the wrong way it might set the building on fire, *after* his attention had

once been called to it. His first thought on such a notice would be vexation at being called upon to do something. His second thought will be: 'Which order of fools do I belong to, the natural or the d——d, in not having foreseen this danger myself, and that I have been waiting for a fireman to come and tell me of it?' A swinging gas jet is but an example of innumerable causes of loss which may be as easily remedied as the danger from a swinging gas jet."

Inspection furnishes the opportunity for discovering these "innumerable" and easily remedied dangers — therefore inspect. — *Nov., '90.*

* * *

HAS THE BUSINESS OF YOUR AGENCY as a whole, or for the GLENS FALLS in particular, fallen off this year? If so, use the rest of the year to change the record. Do not be discouraged, but plan an active campaign at once and enter upon it with determination — you no doubt have several good companies — and let every owner of good property in your vicinity know from your own lips that you represent such companies and mean to do business for them.

For instance, name the particular company whose policy you are anxious some particular property owner should have and give the reasons why he should have that particular company's policy. If you have never tried personal solicitation on the merits of some one of your companies, you will find it a good way to secure new names on your books.

Try it; not once or twice only, but often, with selected men, and presenting a company as old, strong and reputable as the GLENS FALLS you ought to succeed. There is a difference in companies, so let their "differences" serve you. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

ONE OF THE MOST FOOLISH BURNINGS we ever heard of was the case of a farmer who was troubled, in mowing away hay, by hornets that had a big nest hanging from the roof-peak inside the barn.

The farmer, with remarkable presence of purpose and absence of mind, fastened cotton to the end of a long pole and after saturating the cotton with kerosene oil lighted it and reached it to the big hornet-nest. The nest burned and so did the barn, and the farmer was troubled, but not with hornets.

It was a singular case, for until the barn was in flames the farmer had no thought of more danger than in burning worms' nests from his fruit trees. No insurance. — *Nov. '90.*

* * *

THE COST of an article often indicates its quality; but if you know of its quality, the cheaper you can get it the better. The very quality of insurance is affected by the price paid for it. Unremunerative rates always indicate a weakened indemnity.

* * *

THE SUGGESTION IN the last *Now and Then* that Time and Tide would make a good cash insurance firm, as they "wait on no man," inclines the *Insurance Journal* to approve for the further reason that "*Time would Tide over slow collections.*"

HOW COMMON IT IS in case of even a small fire to wait for the firemen, the hose carts and engines, and how common when these arrive to use them up to their full water-throwing capacity, while a few buckets, directly applied, would be all that would be needed.

* * *

IN THE CASE of a western grist mill of doubtful value, which burned under decidedly suspicious circumstances, an acquaintance inquired of the owner, some time after the fire, how he was getting along in collecting his insurance.

"Rather slow," was the reply. "There have been investigations, examinations, amended proofs and all sorts of delay, until I begin to feel *sorry that the darned old mill burned.*"

* * *

EXPERIENCE is valuable, but there are those who would part with theirs at a small per cent. of cost.

* * *

AN ARCHITECT of his own fortune might be surprised at the number of deficiency charges under a schedule rating of his creations.

* * *

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING recently struck a house in a Kansas town, setting it on fire and at the same time considerably touched off the fire alarm, calling out the fire department.

* * *

AS IT WAS IN 1880. "*Old and Tried.*" This sobriquet, like many other good things, came to the GLENS FALLS many years ago, from its agents. The American fondness for nicknames and odd, expressive terms of familiarity — usually with complimentary intent — manifested itself among our agents twenty-five years ago, when they called the Company "*The Glens.*" Many of our older agents still call the Company "*The Glens.*" and it has a pleasant sort of service-stripe look in their letters and a veteran sound when spoken.

Later some of our younger agents, younger than the Company itself, began to refer to the Company as the "*Old and Tried.*" We took the hint and it has proved a felicitous legend. An agent writes us: "'Old and Tried' is so suggestive of age, experience and continuance, and fits the GLENS FALLS so well and is so handy, terse and catching, that I find myself talking your Company oftener than any other I represent." Another says: "'Old and Tried' means a great deal in this vicinity. It is a short and appropriate text and does its own preaching." — *Aug. '87.*

* * *

AN AGENT'S WIFE, speaking of her husband and his business, said: "He seemed to be enjoying a rather slack time a few weeks ago, but he now complains of being very busy."

* * *

A LAZY AGENT has, for himself, one consolation — his tire never punctures.

HAVE you received my last monthly report?" was the postscript inquiry of an agent's letter. We do not know what the actual answer was, but the manager made this queer memo for reply: "Hope so."

* * *

A SENSIBLE FIRE CHIEF. The report of Fire Chief Merrill, of Lawrence, Mass., for 1888, is an informing document. Among other sensible things he says:

"There is one thing that the people might learn to-day from the ancient populace with profit, viz.: That the best way to avoid extensive conflagrations is not to allow them to be kindled. Having no efficient apparatus or means of extinguishing fires, there was but one course to be pursued, and they were as cautious in handling fire as people nowadays generally are in handling nitroglycerin or any other explosive compound. The most natural result growing out of the introduction of fire-extinguishing apparatus might appropriately be presumed to be a diminution of the ravages of fire, but history shows that such is not the case. The very sense of security which grows out of the presence of efficient means of fire extinguishment and insurance breeds such carelessness that we are startled by the apparent paradoxical statement that the ravages of fire have increased in direct proportion to the introduction of improved methods of extinguishing fires. In the manner of construction and alteration of buildings of late years the fire hazards have increased amazingly, and in many cases are criminally faulty; architects, owners and builders have little regard for ordinary precautions for fire protection, the main object generally being to get the most showy or roomy building for the least money, get it well insured and profitably rented and the cup of contentment is full for them, but how does it affect others?"

* * *

WE ARE NEVER in more danger of being laft at than when we are laffing at others.

IT IZ AZ HARD work to make a weak man upright az it iz an empty bag.

IT IS DREADFUL eazy tew mistake what we *think* for what we *know*; this iz the way that most of the lies git born that are traveling around loose. — *Billings*.

* * *

LUCK IS EVER WAITING for something to turn up. Labor, with keen eyes and strong will, will turn up something. — *Cobden*.

* * *

NOT ONLY strike while the iron is hot, but make it hot by striking.

* * *

MOSE," THE TYPICAL FIREMAN. — The typical fireman of our boyhood came from the conventional illustrations and serio-humorous fire literature of those "back-number" days. He was an extreme character of the old New York volunteer department, and as we use the name of "Pat" to give personality to our invented Hibernianisms, so "Mose" stood for the firemanic species of the *genus homo* in the fire stories and the jokes of the time. Chanfrau, in his successful character of Mose, in the drama, did much to create the peculiar and somewhat exaggerated specimen of the fire-laddie which so long stood for the "professional" volunteer.

He was of stalwart build — was Mose — in red woolen shirt, black trousers, belted about the waist, and over all crowned with the stove-pipe hat of that period, worn so decidedly inclined forward that its rim almost touched the lighted end of a cigar which "leaned" upward from a somewhat projecting lower jaw, and this seemed held in place by well-defined soap-locks running forward over the ears. Mose copied no *pose* from Greek or Roman type. It was peculiarly his own. His body rested chiefly on one leg, the other hanging loose, especially at the knee, ready

for orders. His hands just at a rest in his trousers pockets; his arms forming a diamond frame for a body so inclined forward as to look down upon the rest of the world. This is a sort of "wax figger" of Mose off duty, and if it was wound up to the talking point, you would see the head begin a measured swing as if working out with labored efforts through the teeth, both sides of the cigar, this sort of vernacular:

"Say, you feller there, git off der hose er I'll lam yer snoot. It's me's a talking — der yer hear?"

But Mose on duty was entirely another sort. Fire, and smoke, and danger were his natural elements. The high-reaching ladder was his native heath, while roaring flames and crashing walls were the music of his soul. He was a life-car from upper stories through the lurid billows to the solid earth, and when he threw his weight and muscle upon the brakes, a water-spout escaped upon the conflagration that hissed defiance of the Fiend.

We get these ideas from the unpublished handed-down recollections of a veteran Mose, as related of himself, and no old soldier "who fought with Grant," had clearer or more *enlarged* remembrance of things he saw and things he did.

This particular Mose (the "vet") deplored the loss of the art of fighting fire which came in with steam fire engines. "The steamer might puff and blow, but it couldn't wote," nor could it "rise" a stream equal to his recollection of those that went up from the bowels of the "macheen" he "run wid." As an illustration of what had been done, and as a single incident of *fact* out of his personal experience, he once related the following:

"'Twas over in der Bow'ry, and we got there flyin' by the light of der blaze. 'Twas a five story chebang, an old brick and wood fire-trap — stores below and lodgin's above, and she was just roarin'. I went right up der stairways searchin', far folks *jus*t, and got to der top story and I found I was cut off; stairways were blazin'. No ladder there half ways long enough to reach a feller where I was. Suthin' had to be done, and done suddin', and der thing cum to me. I leaned out der winder and yell'd out to foreman Saxie. He heerd. 'Aye, aye,' shouted Saxie. I hollered back, 'Down wid der brakes ter kill, and-send-a-stream-right-up-past-dis-winder.' 'Aye, aye,' shouted Saxie, standin' on der macheen. Up and down went der arms of der fellers; up and down went der red-shirted backs, and up and down went der brakes like the walkin' beam of a Sound steamer — quicker and quicker, and up riz der stream, hiss'n and crackin', stiffer 'n a crowbar — up and up above the winder! 'Keep-er-solid-and-steddy,' I yelled. 'Aye, aye,' says Saxie. Then I sprung for that stream, caught her, and just slid down her, as on a greased pole, safe to der nozzle! and all the fellers shoutin'! Now, this is no brag for myself, *but that is der kind of Geyser our old macheen was* — and don't yer forgit it!"

We are pleased to rescue this thrilling incident from oblivion, and at the same time give it as a sample of the recollections of a veteran "Mose," who, like the nurses who cared for Washington in his teething days, are becoming scarce. — *Contributed to the Agricultural Fireman's Manual by a Glens Falls "feller."* Aug., '91.

* * *

THEY SAY SMITHERS' QUEEN ANNE house was burned because of his own gross negligence."

"Yes. The insurance people proved that he built a fire right in the fire-place, you know. None of these modern Queen Annes can stand that." — *Harper's Bazar*.

* * *

THE MAN WHO has never made a mistake has lost a great many opportunities for learning something.

* * *

WE ARE GIVING OUR BEST EFFORTS, day by day, to keep this little insurance ship directly and safely on her course, and whether she goes fast or slow is of less concern than that she be found complete in her tackle and equipment through every storm. With the help of our agents this is just what we mean shall be. Please, therefore, be not impatient with our inquiries, and pardon, for the sake of our intention, whatever you think overparticular or overcritical, and

especially if you think so *simply* because it is not the manner of other companies. We do not want to add to your labors nor to our own, but we do wish to know just as much about our business as we can, and as it is made up of small single transactions, these must have attention.

— Aug. '91.

* * *

BOSH JILLINGS once gave this bad insurance-wise summer advice to farmers: "Pizen yer old hosses and sick cattle durin' the thunder season. They may think lightnin' struck 'em and remind yer of the lightnin' claws in yer insuranc polercy."

We are afraid that this advice has had its influence, for we hear of more fraudulent claims for lightning-killed live stock this year than usual. There have been cases of horses and cattle dying from dysentery, overeating of green clover, colic, and other diseases, and accidents, followed by claims of death by lightning and plain disapproval thereof on investigation.

It is a safe conclusion to keep in mind that all the dead live stock found in the wide spreading pastures of this country during the lightning season, are *not* victims of "unharnessed electricity," even if they are insured against that uncertain and reckless fluid. — Aug. '91.

* * *

A TYPEWRITTEN DAILY REPORT contained the following startling clause: "Permission to keep 25 bbls. of gunpowder in stove." Inquiry resulted in finding that the original memorandum was "to keep 25 lbs. gunpowder in store."

* * *

IT DOES NOT TAKE MUCH to start a fire. For instance, the phosphorus on a match is easily raised by slight friction to 150° Fahrenheit, at which it ignites. This raises the temperature of the sulphur, if a sulphur match, to 500°, when the sulphur begins to burn. The sulphur raises the heat to 800°, when the wood takes up the combustion and produces flame, and then it depends upon circumstances whether it lights the gas, a cigar or starts a conflagration.

* * *

EXCITED CITIZEN — In heaven's name, Mr. Mayor, the town hall is on fire! Give me the key to the engine-house so that we can get at the fire engine! Mayor — I guess not. It is not enough to lose the town hall and now you want to ruin the engine, too! — *Fliegende Blätter*.

* * *

IGATHER," said the Boston lady, "from the conversation of my nephew, that firemen are in the habit of using rubber hose at their labors." "Yes." "That, I presume, is so that they won't get their feet wet"; and the Boston lady returned to her book with an air of entire satisfaction over having solved a difficult problem

— *Washington Post*.

* * *

JUDGING FROM EXPERIENCE. — *First Reporter* — A fire down street, did you say? *Second Reporter* — Yes. The engines have just gone down. It's going to be a big blaze, too. *F. R.* — How do you know? *S. R.* — Because it's a fireproof building. — *Ex.*

THE *MUSA DOMESTICA* HAZARD" would be a high-sounding and profound title or theme for an insurance paper at some of the coming underwriters' autumn meetings, so we won't undertake to say much on the subject ourselves.

It is a veritable fact that the *Musca domestica*, the ordinary, common, everyday summer nuisance — the domestic fly — is an indirect influence in the direction of an increased fire loss. It has twice come forcibly home to our comprehension this season. Merchants and shop keepers are in the habit of hanging gauze-like fabrics in front of their shelves to protect their merchandise from fly injury. These screens blow against lights or otherwise catch on fire, and a light blaze spreads too rapidly to be put out or to save the curtain. Even if it goes out when the fly curtain has been consumed, there is likely to be damage to goods on every shelf so covered. Especially will the loss count up if rolled or folded fabrics are placed on shelves with their edges in front and against the curtain, for with edges singed or burned, damage will be claimed for every yard of the goods.

Without pursuing the subject further, will say that we have been astonished at the effective work which this sort of fly screen has put in when provoked by a lighted match, a too familiar gas jet, or other exciting cause. What per centum shall be added to merchandise tariffs during the *Musca domestica* period?

* * *

ONE OF THE GOOD THINGS about the GLENS FALLS is its corps of agents. Most of them have represented the Company for many years and know just what the Company's policy is, what it wants and does not want, and there is no friction.

Some of our later appointments may not quite understand why we do not do just as many other companies do, and do it just because they do it — but a very little careful looking over of our brief agency documents will be helpful in understanding what our notions are.

We are not wiser than others — we often wish we were as wise as some of the managers we admire, but knowing our limited capacity, we only undertake those things which we think we can do with fair results. Anyhow, the results have been fair, and continuously so, and, therefore, we have been rather confirmed in the idea that if we derive different results from the average we must do differently from the many, and so it comes that the GLENS FALLS has its individuality. And our agents in their cheerful helpfulness deserve and have our thanks and praise for their contribution to this individuality and to the results that this individuality has achieved.

* * *

IN CASE OF ALL FORMS covering personal property in a building, I always use the term "while contained therein" instead of leaving out the qualifying word "while" as is so often done. It is better to be exact in forms of contracts than otherwise.

* * *

IT IS BETTER to control a few good risks than to have the agency of too many companies.

SOME AGENTS are as sharp as a pin, but, like a pin, they are pointed one way and headed the other.

* * *

THE MAN with a small income, who saves some and safely invests his savings, is better off than others who spend the whole of a larger income.

Besides, the habit of saving makes better men, every way, than do habits of indulgent prodigality.

Saving among average men is becoming a lost art.

New desires arise as rapidly as old ones are satisfied, and the efforts to measure up to false standards of living, by fair or foul means, is responsible for much of private and public dishonesty.

It is often a struggle between a "shanks-horse" need and purse and a "honk-honk" hankering.

The best study of French is of the frugality and thrift of France. With our greatly larger population we do not have half as many depositors in savings institutions as that country.

It is not the necessities of life that cost so much. Luxuries come high.

Not high-lofty-make-believes, but plain living, seasoned with common sense, guards our cash account.

Society is teeming with between men, parasites, who discount the rewards of industry without contributing to usefulness. Too many fear to be called a "tightwad" by servants and associates.

If prices are high, our extravagance has made them so — we are "up against" our own medicine.

The most useful financial precept is the Hebrew's "something over" — the forced adjustment of expenditures for a remainder of income, every year.

To attain "something over" may leave out much of the alphabet of mere pleasure for a while, but the remaining letters ultimately spell prosperity.

Our acquired habits of spending need adjustment first — other reforms will follow.

Your invested savings become a silent, contributing partner, without salary or division of earnings. Such a partner is worth sacrifice and self-denial.

* * *

MENTION is made in the *Local Agent* of a considerable line of insurance which has been held by the same agency for years. Another office seeking a share of this large line and asking why it had been so long given to the one agent, was told that this agent always placed the business in the best companies; that he went through the plant frequently; had given valuable suggestions and reported neglect on the part of employees which might have caused fire and had given the owners the benefit of his knowledge and experience as to proper forms and care of the insured property and made himself so serviceable that the owners would stick by him. The *Local Agent* truly says: "The more attention an agent pays to his customer the stronger hold he has on his business."

"ANY BLAMED fool agent knows the difference between short and pro rata rates." "Of course — that's why I asked you."

* * *

AN AUTOMOBILIST agent among his valuable observations from experience says: "It's not safe to take children automobiling — before they can walk."

* * *

SOME conduct their business with acumen and others succeed better with a spot cash system.

BLAMELESS poverty never was a disgrace, and shameless riches didn't use to be.

* * *

SOME pay as they go and others have to pay when they move in.

* * *

THE SLOW and sure agent is not always sure of "getting there" in time.

* * *

SOME ONE prescribes hearty laughter as a cure for dyspepsia; but what in the world will produce hilarity in a dyspeptic?

* * *

THERE IS NOTHING quite so disconcerting to our enemies as a quiet self-control that refuses to show irritation or offense.

* * *

WILLIS — "Did the policy-holders have a voice in the affairs of the company?" *Gillis* — "Yes, the customary howl."

* * *

WHEN ALL the schemes and plans for reducing the insurance tax are resolved into their last analysis, it will be found that fewer fires, less fire loss, is an absolute precedent.

* * *

"I LIKE to see an agent enthusiastic in his business, even to the extent of one I once knew who felt a misery in seeing good property that wasn't insured in his office."

* * *

POLITELY SARCASTIC employer to a chronically tardy employee who arrived about 10 o'clock

* * *

A.M.: "How do you do, Mr. Smith? It has been a fine day, hasn't it?" — *Bellman*.

* * *

SOME MEN are as embarrassed in meeting strangers as others are in meeting their obligations.

* * *

THE MOST prominent labor agitator I know of is a rabid eight-hour man with a fifteen-hour wife.

* * *

IT IS NOT so bad for one who never pays anything to owe you a grudge.

* * *

THE LITTLE GIRL who was presented with a bantam hen was disappointed in the size of its first egg. Her ideal egg was that of an ostrich, a specimen of which was on the mantel in the drawing room. This specimen she placed near the spot where the bantam nested, inscribed: "Something like this, please. Keep on trying."

Now, there are bantam agencies — but, no matter, a bantam omelet is better eating than one made from ostrich eggs.

THERE ARE some companies so eager for business, seemingly for the mere sake of aggregate, that they are just organized appetites.



NEW CAPITAL and old experience are available for new companies," says a writer on the fire insurance situation.

Our artist has tried in this sketch to illustrate this utterance; but he has made "Old Experience" too old for a successful combination, no matter how much capital he brings with him. Men often get too old to profitably use their experience, but blessed is the young man who starts with a studious observation of the experience of others. It is like beginning where others left off.

THERE IS one thing," said a fire insurance adjuster to a life ditto, "you are never troubled with settling smoke and water losses."

"Oh, I don't know," replied the life man. "We had two deaths from drowning last month, and only last week one of our policy-holders died of a tobacco heart."

* * *

SON: Pop, what's the difference between a promoter and a speculator?

Pop: Usually, my boy, they are pusillanimous terms signifying the same thing.

* * *

ONCE IN A great while even an old insurance company succumbs to adverse conditions and retires, suggesting to calamity prophets something like that of the ninety-year-old lady sitting with her husband of ninety-three in sorrow over the death of their son of seventy: "John," said the wife, "you know I always said we would never raise that boy."

* * *

ASPIRATION plus Perspiration equals inspiration.

SOME contract bad habits, and others expand them.

* * *

* * *

WHY TRY to save trouble when it is so easy to borrow it?

IT IS BETTER to work without plan than to plan without work.

SOME PROMOTERS of new companies talk as hopefully of the future of their promotions as the bride of a day who said in the ecstasy of her present happiness: "Just think of it, dearest, fifty years from yesterday will be our golden anniversary!"

* * *

IT SOMEWHAT relieves our wonder at the large and increasing number of individual and mutual underwriters when we read that the crop of mushrooms in France last year reached hundreds of tons.

* * *

YES, underwriters are indeed born; no way of preventing it has yet been discovered.

* * *

A LUCID present is better than a brilliant past or a bright future.

* * *

WORRY is extra premium on trouble.

* * *

"A SOFT answer turneth away wrath"; but it often constitutes a waiver.

* * *

"AS THE crackling of thorns under the pot," so are the claims of cheap insurance.

* * *

"HOPE DEFERRED maketh the heart sick"; but insurance deferred tendeth to poverty.

* * *

THROUGH wisdom is a house builded; by understanding is it established"; but insurance maketh the household to lie down in peace to sleep.

* * *

DUDES in the business would better roll up their sleeves more and their trousers less; have more point to their conversation and less to their shoes.

* * *

WIDOWS' WEEDS and bridal orange blossoms grow in the same soil; so are prompt reports of losses and long delayed other reports indigenous to the same agency.

* * *

WHEN INSURING a man's religious possessions remember that the title is usually in his wife's name.

THE TROUBLE with some of the younger underwriters is, they don't do much between meals.

* * *

"BUY TRUTH and hold it fast; also wisdom, instruction," and the best insurance in the market.

* * *

SOME insurance men are both successes and failures; successes as failures and failures as successes.

* * *

WE ARE good enough oculists to say, that a certain brand of weak eyes does not so much need stronger as fewer glasses.

* * *

HONESTY may be the best policy; but a big policy on a small value does not promote the best honesty.

THERE ARE some agents who write a poor risk in haste and think it over with regret afterwards; others deliberately think it over first and write it just the same.

* * *

TRUTHFULNESS is an important factor in a lasting reputation. Think how much that solitary cherry-tree instance in the life of Washington has done to keep him before the people.

* * *

SOME THINGS require more bossing than others. One man can command an army, but it usually takes a whole town to tell a dozen firemen what to do at a fire, and have poor success at that.

* * *

"AN ANGRY man stirreth up strife"; and if he is also unreasonable, delayeth adjustment.

* * *

"A PRUDENT man dealeth with knowledge" and with resident agents of reliable companies.

* * *

"PRIDE GOETH before destruction"; but the humble adjuster is a consolation afterwards.

* * *

AN AGENT may ride a bicycle and not be, in any unpleasant sense, an insurance pedal-er.

* * *

CONFIDENCE in an unknown peddler of insurance is as a "broken tooth and a leg out of joint."

* * *

AVERAGE HUMAN nature exposes itself more in a claim for fire loss than in a prayer meeting.

* * *

NATURE has wisely considered the habitual kicker; he is so built that he can't kick himself.

* * *

THERE ARE some insurance men with more money than brains; and yet they are not real opulent.

MANY a reckless and demoralizing agent is less to blame than the companies he does not misrepresent.

* * *

CLEANLINESS may be next to godliness; but a soap factory adjoining a church increases the rate on the latter all the same.

* * *

SOME MEN may illumine their pathway to success; but others will be convicted of arson and fetch up in the penitentiary.

* * *

THE ETHICS of insurance seems to cause managers less anxiety than its exigencies.

* * *

THERE is one place to which a faithful agent can turn and always find appreciation; that is — the dictionary.

* * *

It is singular that insurance companies never go into the hands of receivers until there is nothing to receive.

* * *

THERE is an insurance man who thinks he is a devil of a fellow; but the only evidence of it is his cloven breath.

SURELY the churning of cream bringeth forth butter and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood"; but the suing of Lloyds bringeth forth nothing.

* * *

SOME fire insurance companies, Lloyds, Mutual and others, seem to be competing for the epitaph, "Fire-Fried and Time-Busted."

— June '96.

* * *

IGNORANCE of law excuses no one, except the lawyer in the case.

* * *

AN HONORABLE competitor is a good enough business friend.

* * *

A SOME-TIME-AGO sufferer by fire who held certain uncertain Lloyd policies, thinks he now recognizes the voice of contemned Wisdom in her prophecy:

"I will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.

"When your fear cometh as desolation, and destruction as a whirlwind.

"Then shall ye call upon me, but I will not answer; ye shall seek me, but shall not find."

* * *

FRIENDLY CALLER—"Why are you looking so cast down and solemn this morning?"

Local Agent—"I am feeling a bit badly. You see, I insured that old vacant warehouse on Walter street day before yesterday, and it burned last night."

Friendly Caller—"Well, now, don't grieve about it. Can't be helped, you know; and, besides, perhaps the darned old thing might have burned, anyway!"

* * *

IN A CASE before the Superior Court of Salem, Mass., fifteen companies were involved concerning a loss which occurred less than one year ago. The case was settled in court, but of these fifteen companies thirteen were mutuals, nine of which had retired from business!

— June '96.

* * *

WHAT COMPANY having an hundred agents, and one of them habitually delinquent, doth not have that one more in mind than the ninety and nine?

* * *

NEVER repeat evil reports about your competitor unless you know they are true; and don't do it then if he is bigger than you, or has a better reputation.

* * *

FIRE INSURANCE has hardly reached the precision of mathematical science, and the few things which are absolutely exact and certain make us sorry.

THERE WAS a young city and thoughtless men did inhabit it.
A great and awful wind fell upon that city and laid it waste.
A poor wise man of that city was of those who perished.

Now this same poor wise man had knowledge and understanding,
and aforetime provided for the rebuilding of the habitations of such as
hearkened to his words.

Yet no man remembered that poor wise man, nor the labor he did
in persuading provision against the fierce tornado, when it might come
roaring from its lair.

Still that same poor insurance man wrought well and made many
happy homes in that resurrected city.

The good he did lives after him; so do those unto whom he did it.

If you look at the ninth chapter of Ecclesiastes you will find a
similar case of forgetfulness and ingratitude recorded, but you will
look in vain to find any better tornado insurance than that afforded
by a GLENS FALLS policy.

* * *

MISTRESS — "What a fearful smell of gas! I suppose, Bridget, it is all
right in the dining room?"

Bridget — "Oh, yes, mum. I blowed it out a long time ago in there."

— *London Fun.*

* * *

MY WIFE smelled fire for twenty years
Each night when she awoke;
But when at last it came, she did
Not even smell the smoke!

* * *

A GENT — "Am told that you are thinking of insuring in my com-
pany. Glad you approve the company."

Insurer — "I approve thinking about it."

* * *

AT A HOTEL in a small western town, says a Pacific coast paper,
a lady guest came downstairs to the office three times in quick
succession for a glass of water. The third time the clerk inquired the
cause of these successive calls for water.

"I know you'll just scream when I tell you," said the lady, "but
I'm trying to put out a fire in my room."

* * *

SPECIAL AGENT — "What is your friend B—— doing now?"
Citizen — "Nothing."

Special Agent — "When I was here a few months ago he was work-
ing hard to get the agency of some company to start in the insurance
business."

Citizen — "Yes, he got it."

* * *

A GENT — "Am sorry, madam, that you have had a fire. Now, I
suppose, you want your damages."

Policy-holder — "Damages? Them's what I've got. Satisfaction
is what I want."

AM SORRY that I cannot make immediate payment," wrote the young agent in response to a call for overdue premiums. "My uncle, who has been very kind to me, has recently died and left me — but no matter about my private affairs, you are going to get your pay."

The fact was as stated; his uncle died and "left him," because he couldn't take his nephew along.

* * *

THE HOT AIR of a heated argument often chills a promising prospect of getting a desirable line of insurance.

* * *

AN OPTIMIST is one who would rather believe that everything is all right than know the truth.

— *Lippincott's*.

* * *

A PESSIMIST is one, who of two evils, chooses both. — *Everybody's*.

* * *

SOME ARE born good, some

* * *

make good, and others are caught with the goods. — *Life*.

* * *

TO TALK much and arrive nowhere is the same as climbing a tree to catch fish. — *From the Chinese*.

* * *

WE OFTEN suffer from the indigestion of other people.

* * *

SOME DECEIVE us by what they say while others never deceive us whatever they say.

THE GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY wants the confidence of its agents, and needs their hearty and zealous co-operation, and in all modesty we believe the Company deserves both. Let it have both, with emphasis, during the present year — you well enough know what this means in the present condition of the business. It certainly does not mean simply an increased business. Rates are improving somewhat in certain localities, but in the main they are hanging about the minimum, forced by an unreasoning and unreasonable competition, while the abnormal fire loss of 1891 has, so far, projected its unpleasant ratio into the new year. Therefore, such co-operation as will be helpful involves the exercise of your best judgment and care in the selection and, especially, rejection of risks, rates and insurers. Also thoroughly look over your books, with a keen scent for moral hazard, and wherever you have a doubt of the parties insured, the amount insured as to the present values, or any question as to the financial tendencies of any policy-holder, take advantage of the doubt and get on the safe side, and be particular to have these things in mind in case of new risks. Eliminate, to the fullest possible extent, the "fire-bug" from your business. Fraudulent losses have become too great a burden, so lead not into temptation by overinsurance or any insurance of unknown, or unfavorable, or doubtful characters, old, shopworn or unsalable stock, or men in the demoralizing toils of financial trouble. In brief, just bring your best judgment, your insurance experience, education and intuition, and your enlivened common sense to bear in a sort of review of policies in force as well as in writing new ones, and you will deserve good results. — *April, '92*.

JAMIE," said the kindly agent to his office boy, "I wish you wouldn't come to the office with soiled hands. What would you say if I came in every morning with dirty hands?"

"Well," replied the boy, "I'd try to be that perlite as not to mention it."

* * *

SPECIAL AGENT—"You told me that you owed Mr. Scott alone; but I find that you owe several other people."

Agent—"I still say that I owe Mr. Scott a loan."

* * *

AN AGENT in a letter of excuse for a "no business" report, says: "I have been so much interested in other matters of late that I have neglected insurance, — but our nine is leading the league."

* * *

TIM—"Me brudder is now janitor of a bank be day and de night watchman of a factory be night."

Sam—"When does he sleep?"

Tim—"Do yer moind that I sed he is a night watchman!"

* * *

TO SAY of an agent that he is one of a thousand puts him in a hopeless minority.

* * *

THOSE WHO pay promptly are likely to live longer than others, for doctors can't afford to let such men die.

* * *

SOMETIMES AN AGENT ARGUES that he does not see why the GLENS FALLS is not strong enough to do almost anything any other company will do. We think it a good part of wisdom to know what we cannot do — the greater part, perhaps. We certainly have come to know that there are some things we cannot do, some risks we cannot write, some rates we cannot accept, some companies we cannot follow. We cannot trust to luck when there are safe rules and established experience and precedent to guide us. We really do not want to do business for the fun of doing it, or pile up dangerous liabilities for the sake of income, simply. We cannot compete with manufacturing mutuals that have no agents and pay no commissions, nor with other mutuals having no capital back of their promises, or dividends to provide for, nor with companies that are gathering business on "chance" of profit and unload by reinsurance, if the worst happens, leaving their agents in the lurch and their expirations in a rival's possession. We propose to continue in the business and we suppose you do. Let us know each other as thoroughly as we can, and go on together for the permanent mutual advantage which will come from a devoted common purpose to improve the situation of the great business of fire insurance as far as we can, and to increase the strength and honor of the company we are serving, *that it may the better serve us*. It is good to know the things we cannot do, and not do them. — April, '92.

THOSE WHO live fast lives have a loose way of doing it.

* * *

WHAT A LOT of time and energy is wasted in impressing the fact that something ought to be done!

* * *

DON'T GET the upperhand in an underhanded way.

* * *

THERE ARE many slips after the cup leaves the lips.

* * *

EVERYTHING within reach comes to those who wait on themselves.

* * *

THE MOST comforting thing in the hour of trial is an acquittal.

* * *

AN AGENT can't drink beer and talk insurance in the same breath.

MERE PERSISTENCE often makes a larger monthly report than inactive ability.

* * *

ONE FEATURE OF amiability is keeping your troubles to yourself.

* * *

IT IS BETTER to talk yourself up than to talk others down.

* * *

WHEN AN adjuster's judgment is pitted against a woman's tears, the proof of loss is likely to be "soaked."

* * *

THE FOLLOWING nonsense jingles, or nursery rimes, are for the Mother Goose Order of Insurance Kindergartners. They are not so well organized as the Blue Goose Order, but there are more of them.

LITTLE MISS MOFFICE sat in the office, 'phoning the hours away — the agent was gone, and being alone, she talked with her chums all day!

HICKERY! dickery! dock! a mouse ran over the clock, and made it strike five, when, my sakes alive! the office work stopped with a shock!

JACK SPRATT is very fat, his partner very lean; but, between them both, they scoop the business clean!

THERE IS an agent in our town who thinks he's wondrous wise; he jumped into the local board to give the rates a rise; but when the rates were boosted up — and he helped with might and main — he jumped right out of the local board and is cutting rates again!

* * *

THE VALUE of a dollar depends somewhat upon how it is earned and much upon how it is spent.

* * *

THERE ARE MANY insurance companies, but only one GLENS FALLS" is the way western manager Whitlock tersely expresses the unique and exceptional record and success of the Company. There is but one GLENS FALLS, and it is desired that it shall have an abiding home in every one of its agency offices. If, however, any agency has

too many companies, and the GLENS FALLS is of the too many, we will esteem it a kindness to be so advised. If some other company in the agency has less promise of living and abiding in the business, and can be better spared, spare it. It is well, just now, for agents to measure and size up the present and prospective usefulness of their companies and act accordingly. It is important for an agent who proposes to continue in the business to look ahead, plan for the future and build for the years to come. Things present are important, but still more so if they relate to the by and by.

We believe that this year of grace will be an important one to the agency business, especially in its influence on what is to be, and we urge you not to be passive and waiting, but conservatively and deliberately aggressive. Let insurers know that you are in the business, and that you are well equipped to *stay* in it. — *April, '92.*

* * *

THE AGENT who is anticipating some new business to-morrow, and resolves to aid his anticipations to the best of his ability, is better off and happier than the one who mourns over the renewal he lost day before yesterday.

* * *

AT THE CLOSE of an acrimonious morning session of a county board of underwriters, a member gave notice that at the afternoon session he proposed to call attention to the dishonorable practices which were becoming too frequent, and that he would not hesitate to name members who were to blame.

At the afternoon session he said: "With reference to my notice this morning, I have been interviewed by about all the members present. Some have begged me not to mention their names and others threatened me if I mentioned theirs, and as it altogether amounts to such a general confession of so many more than I supposed were guilty, I feel too lonesome and too timid to carry out my purpose. In self-defense I move that we adjourn."

* * *

A GROUP of fire insurance men were talking of things pertaining to the business, when the matter of the frequency of upholstered lounge, couch, sofa, and tête-à-tête fires was mentioned. One asked what the others thought the chief cause of so many fires of this sort, when a prominent manager, with the confidence of experience, quickly replied: "Sparkling."

It was instantly convincing, and another authoritative heading is added to the up-to-date classification of the origin of fires.

* * *

TIME is under no obligation to preserve that which was created without his aid," said George Eliot.

Time not only tests but creates reputation. It is a good thing to be "Old and Tried."

YOU ARE MR. JONES, I believe?" said a solemn, nervous sort of man as he timidly entered a fire insurance agency office.

"Yes, sir," said the agent, "that's my name."

"Pleased to find you in. Always like to deal with the head man. I see that you represent strong and well-known companies," glancing at signs on the office walls.

"Yes, sir; the very best."

"I suppose that dwelling rates are pretty low?"

"Very low, sir, in favorable locations. Is your dwelling in town, or ——?"

"With insurance so cheap and easily procured it would be hard lines for a man with a family to be burned out of house and home without insurance, wouldn't it?"

"I should greatly pity such a negligent unfortunate. What street is ——?"

"Glad to hear you say so, for it encourages me to hand you this subscription paper. I am one of these unfortunates and am soliciting the kindly contributions of those whose sense of pity so kindly expressed by you ——."

The agent glanced over the subscription document and his language is copyrighted with all rights reserved.

* * *

IF YOU KNOW anything about them, what kind of an auto do you think best for my use?" was the written inquiry of an agent of the special agent of one of his companies.

The special agent replied: "There are three well-known kinds, either or all of which would be useful in your business. 1. Auto do more business. 2. Auto report more promptly. 3. Auto keep your account paid up more closely. Try number three first."

* * *

FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS, through all the changes and vicissitudes — the failures, retirements, mismanagement and misfortunes of competing companies, with their injuries and trouble to agents, the GLENS FALLS has brought no dishonor, discredit, hesitancy or doubt to any one holding its commission or its policies. The Company has pursued the even tenor of its own plans and purposes, avoiding new schemes, experiments, and the imitation of others, until it has a standing and reputation conceded to be exceptional and unique. The GLENS FALLS has always had a thoroughly honest and earnest administration, stimulated by the one desire to build up and establish a sound company which should prove valuable to its agents by an enlarged and attractive influence and usefulness in their offices. You know what the result has been, for no other company has taken more pains to keep its agents so well informed and so entirely familiar with its doings and actual condition at all times. It is a strong, reliable, consistent, thoroughly reputable institution, and it is our determined purpose to continue it so. — *April, '92*

THE FOLLOWING VERSIFIED "incendiary" mentions are from the *Insurance Solicitor*:

With pipe duly lighted he lay in his bed,
 "I'll smoke and I'll read for an hour," he said;
 He read and he slept, and his pipe — well, you see,
 It was found with his bones among the débris.

'Twas only an "innocent" wooden spittoon,
 For use in the store of a close-fisted loon;
 Only that — and a "lingering" stump of cigar —
 But the blaze in the night was seen from afar.

She lighted the fire with kerosene "ile."
 Did anything happen? Well, I should smile!
 The funeral cost a round hundred, they say —
 As performed at a neighbor's over the way.

One cold, frosty morning he filled the stove up
 With paper and kindling and coal to the top,
 And opening the dampers ascended the stairs,
 In slumber to bury the world and its cares;
 While later the coal and the kindlings conspire
 To call out the firemen to put out the fire.

* * *

OTHER INSURANCE PERMITTED" is not a wholesome or sufficient clause in a policy. Not only should the amount of other insurance be named, as a rule, but other insurance should be limited to concurrent forms of policies, for it is not good practice to write non-concurrent forms. Be particular in this respect and see that all policies on the same risk are worded alike. Observing this will save complications and other unpleasant features natural to the adjustment of non-concurrent policies.

* * *

I DO NOT CONSIDER MYSELF very superstitious," said an Indiana agent, "yet every once in a while something occurs to give me a twist in that direction. Now, here's a letter by this morning's mail declining a certain risk, and it happens that this is the *thirteenth* company in which I have written it, and this is the *thirteenth* company which has declined it, and, by jolly, it so chances that *this particular risk burned to the ground last night, July 13th*. Thirteen does seem to really be an unlucky number!"

* * *

YOU MAY TALK and joke as much as you please about the omnipresence and the abounding "get there" of insurance agents, yet these same persistent missionaries have made all the difference between poverty and comfort in thousands of homes.

* * *

UNRIGHTEOUS CLAIMS for damage are a feature in the business which is increasing in its frequency, annoyance and unreasonableness. It belongs under the general head of moral hazard, for

wherever this is manifested it should be regarded as a future moral objection to the insurer — a man is not solidly honest who has a different standard of ethics in dealing with an insurance company from that used in his everyday business.

A small fire, smoke or water damage is too often considered an opportunity for an extravagant claim, relying upon the disposition of companies to be overgenerous rather than spend time enough to reach a fair adjustment or brook the dissatisfaction of a claimant. Especially is this wrong likely to appear in case of small damages when a large number of companies are interested. It is thought that even an excessive claim will cost each company so little that no individual of them can afford to protest, and it is true that companies have sinned against themselves in this direction.

Fire insurance is an honorable and honest business. No class of claims involving such an aggregate are so cheerfully, promptly and fairly met, and it is due the companies and honest insurers that the speculative and exorbitant claimant be firmly "sat down upon."

There are honest differences of judgment and opinions, but there is a growing "often-ness" of self-evident attempts to make a little fire a great blessing. When such claimants are found out make a mental prohibitory note of them.

* * *

AMONG THE CURIOUS claims for damage which we have lately heard of, are the following:

For a stove which was broken from a fall occasioned by the falling out of a leg. There was fire *in* the stove at the time, but none outside of it.

For smoke damage from a kerosene lamp which was left burning with wick turned up too high.

For loss of a kerosene chandelier which fell from an insecure fastening and was broken by the fall.

For a stove damaged by overheating from its own fire.

For an overcoat scorched by its inclosed owner standing too near a hot stove on a cold day.

For damage occasioned by smoke escaping from an open stove-pipe hole in a chimney having a poor draught.

For crockery and glassware broken by the owner running against and overturning a side table in his dining room, through which he hastily rushed in the dark of night, to reach the street in response to an alarm from the village fire-bell.

Only one of the above instances came within our own experience, but all show the tendency there is to make an insurance policy do more than it agrees to do. A fire policy is a good thing to have, but there are some kinds of damage to property that it was never intended to make good.

* * *

DO NOT LET OTHERS look after your expirations closer than you do yourself, even if they are willing to do so.

SHE — “Should I say ‘the building burned up’ or ‘the building burned down’?”

Agent — “Madam, that depends whether the combustion which consumed the structure had its incipency in the attic region or in the basement portion. My own stereotyped expression however, is ‘building burned — loss total.’”

* * *

JOVE! Mary, the house is on fire!” “Well, get up as quick as you can, and cover the furniture with rubber sheets and put on your bathing suit before the hose company gets here.”

* * *

THE FOLLOWING COMPOSITION by an insurance agent’s little boy is taken from the *Review*. It ends with a conundrum which will not be very difficult for insurance men to answer:

My Pa is a fire insurance agint and He said he got a Insurance lesson from a pig Pen. It was Farmer Jones’ pig pen. In His pig Pen is 2 fat and clumsey Hogs and 1 lean but Active Pig. Jones He wanted to Hurry up the Hogs to get real Fat. But the Hogs wouldnt not Eat so much as He wanted Them to. So he puts this Pig into the Business. Then the Hogs would keep the Pig from the Corn. They would eat and eat ’till They almost Bust. When They got tired Eating and lay down in the straw They would go back when the Pig went for what They left. Then they would Try and clean the Trough. But they never could for there was Lots of Corn. The lean Pig was so Spry that he sometimes Got first to the Corn and he Got so he kept grabbing. But he had Plenty when the Hogs was Grunting in their Sleep. Pa said, “Johnny, them Hogs are Humping up the time when they will be in Pork barrels. Then that Pig will be still alive and kicking and Have it all His own way. Next year He will Be a Hog himself.” I know that Eating too much is bad Business. I know that my Own self. But I Don’t know what the Insurance lesson is that Pa got from jones’ Pig pen. Do you?

JOHNNY.

* * *

CONSCIENCE CASES are not new to this office, but they are not all of the same type. The latest is the direct offer of a party to whom this Company paid a loss some seven years ago, to return the money. It seems that his wife exceedingly disliked the location of the little cottage which our agent insured, and as they could not sell it the husband consented that she might arrange with a third party to fire it. The arrangement was made. The insurance was less than the cost of replacing the cottage, but more than it would sell for. Our adjuster at the time had his suspicions and payment was delayed for some time in hopes to secure evidence. The delay was most annoying to our agent, who wanted the “send off” of one of those “prompt and satisfactory” payments by a “gentlemanly” adjuster which we sometimes see in the local press. The wife died, the hired incendiary disappeared, and the owner’s conscience has been admonishing him of a judgment to come or of the possible reappearance of the hired man, until he proposes to make restitution of his ill-gotten insurance, and shows his good faith by sending on a remittance “on account,” which has helped out our semi-annual statement to the extent of \$175. The balance is to come by installments.

Conscience does not make cowards of all; it sometimes makes courageous penitents.

A FRIEND WRITES concerning our new office building, which he had seen in passing through Glens Falls, that "with a soldiers' monument in front and a church in rear, a religious patriotism ought to pervade the Company's transactions." We can assure our friend that what ought to be will be, and that we are not oblivious of our surroundings.

* * *

THE EASILY PROCURED reinsurance of the entire business of failing fire insurance companies works an injury to the stronger companies and their agents. So long as companies die, and dying bring only better indemnity to their policy-holders, so long will the insuring public be indifferent to the promise of continuing indemnity, or otherwise, that there may be in the rates, practice, management or financial condition of companies. Some of the most unpromising indemnity offered in the competition of the last year or two has been endorsed and made good by reinsurance.

The effect of this common transaction has been to make void results otherwise to be expected from the voluntary or compelled retirement of weak and mismanaged companies. It also encourages small companies to continue their competitive schemes for survival, trusting to luck for better than probable results and knowing that about the worst that can happen is to fall into the waiting arms of reinsurance at a liberal discount of pro rata rates. Suppose there had been no such convenient and blessed last resort as wholesale reinsurance, and that every retirement of a company for the last two years meant so much outstanding uncertain indemnity, how thoroughly would public discrimination as to companies have been aroused to the advantage of the stronger and more deserving and their agencies.

Such reinsurance may be a blessing to the policy-holders and stockholders of retiring companies, but it is a question well worth pondering, whether the making good their contracts, liable to have been secured by competitive demoralization, low rates and high commissions, is for the best good of surviving interests. — *April, '32.*

* * *

SMITH—"It's a very sad thing to be burned out so soon after commencing business — I'm very sorry for you. Don't you feel discouraged?"

Schmitski—"Vel, mine frent, I could tole you bedder boud dot ven I vind ouet how much dose insurings vellers veel zorry, too."

* * *

ADJUSTER—"It is very singular that you should have saved everything else in your house and let this old piano burn, which happened to be the only thing insured."

Spinster Claimant—"Does seem strange, but you see — that is — it appears, that the firemen couldn't play on it."

* * *

IT IS ABOUT TIME," said a manager to his special agent, "to begin running our risks through a sieve instead of wiping them up with a sponge."

INSURER—"See here, if I give your office all my insurance, may I hope for a reduction in rates in the near future?"

Agent—"Certainly, sir, certainly, you may hope, for—well, this is an awful free country."

* * *

THERE IS A DOUBTFUL sentiment in the following:

I hold it true whate'er befall;

I feel it when my luck has turned—

'Tis better to have insured and burned
Than ne'er to have insured at all.

* * *

IT DOESN'T PAY to do much talking when you're mad enough to choke,
Because the word that stings the deepest is the one that's never spoke;
Let the other fellow wrangle till the storm has blown away,
Then he'll do a heap of thinking 'bout the things you didn't say.

* * *

MODERN-ANTIQUITY

A curious combination that,
Of music and of prose,
When Nero played the fiddle
While firemen played the hose.

* * *

A GENT (*trying a new clerk*)—"Suppose I insure Jobson's stock of merchandise for \$3,333 at short rates of \$1.16 for 33 weeks, less 12½, how much will Jobson pay?"

New clerk (quickly)—"Nothing."

Agent—"Nothing! You don't know much about figures."

Clerk—"Well, I've clerked it for Jobson and *I know him*."

* * *

STRANGER—"Is there a stationary store in this village?"

Native—"I can't say for certain, for this village is in the cyclone belt."

* * *

POLICY-HOLDER—"When I tell you that I will pay that premium very soon, it seems very odd that you insist on canceling the policy."

Agent. "It may seem *odd* to you, but after waiting as long as I have cancelation is my only way to get *even*."

* * *

IT WOULD APPEAR from the following that fireproof construction is sometimes objectionable:

The late Gen. Meigs was responsible for that architectural monstrosity, as some people designate it, known as the Pension Bureau. The story goes, as Kate Field tells it, that Gen. Meigs once took Gen. Phil. Sheridan to see the building, and asked him what he thought of it. "Well, Meigs," replied Sheridan, "there is only one objection so far as I can see." "What's that?" "I'm told the darned old thing is fireproof."

* * *

DRUMMER—Have you a fire-escape in this hotel? *Boniface*—We have ten of them. *Drummer*—Thought so. The fire all escaped from my room last night, and I almost froze.—*Jewellers' Circular*.

SECOND OR THIRD HANDED we get the following involved verbatim final clause of an actual report on the survey of a risk:

"Considering the nature of the risk, its general characteristics and surroundings, the hazard apparent resolves itself into a maximum of fact."

* * *

NATURAL, ANYHOW

To the under dog in the fight they say,
One's sympathies should incline.
Mine always do in the strongest way
When the under dog is mine.

But a change of mind may be quickly wrought,
And our sympathies otherwise run,
For the under dog I have little thought
When mine is the upper one.

* * *

PAT — "Did the foire distoorb you lasht noight?"

Tim — "It did. Divil the wink did I get all noight fur the bells."

Pat — "They used t'bother me the same way."

Tim — "An' don't they now?"

Pat — "Not a bit. I jined the voloonteer foire department four years ago an' don't hear fire alarms now."

* * *

BY GEORGE! Mary, but I have just dreamed that the store was on fire!" said a Cincinnati merchant as he awoke the other night; and half an hour later word came that his establishment had burned out. As the companies found good reasons for refusing to pay the insurance, it would have been better had he not prepared for that dream.

* * *

THEORY WITHOUT PRACTICE is absolutely a worthless commodity; practice without theory is worth about \$15 a week; and when both are well combined in one man of sound judgment, the combination is worth up to \$10,000 a year. — *Engineering Magazine*.

* * *

THE RECENT lectures by a prominent physician on "How to Lie While Sleeping" hardly seem along the line of promoting the truths of underwriting.

* * *

DEPRESSIONAL

Our solid assets melt away,
Consumed by ceaseless rage of fire;
The wires and mails of every day
Recall the fate of ancient Tyre.
The tootings of Reform brass bands
Sound feeble as by distance spent,
Insurance stands with listless hands,
Dazed by the much incindement,
O, Unexpected, come thou yet,
Come help us out — and don't forget.

* * *

THAT A MERE dude should be a failure as an insurance agent is evident on the face of the thing.

WE TOOK POSSESSION of this new building about the middle of June, 1891. It proved a no small undertaking to move, and the more we brought from our vaults and other storage places the old records and papers which had been gathering for more than forty years, the more the wonder grew how our old building could have held so much. But we are getting to feel "at home" in our new quarters and to enjoy the abundant room and increased convenience and facilities for our work.



OUR NEW HOME, 1891

It is a solid, thoroughly well constructed building of pressed brick, Medina stone and terra cotta, with black Pennsylvania slate for roof. It is roomy, convenient and is a conspicuous and attractive feature of our village.

The *out-looks* — for there is an open view in every direction — are worth mentioning, especially as we would like to have our agents and friends have some idea of the home office situation and environment.

Daylight is a cheap luxury in our new quarters — we have lots of it. While the large windows let a flood of light in, they afford broad outside views of a delightful vicinity. The building fronts on Monument Square, and the view from the entrance, directors' room, library and general office is past our beautiful Soldiers' Monument, down through the overarching elms of Glen street, lined with business buildings, to Fountain Square, and even beyond. Across Glen street, opposite our building are well constructed business blocks and pleasant dwellings and lawns.

On the other side is Bay street with its residences, lawns and gardens. In rear is a stone, vine-clad church and the large and handsomely kept private grounds of one of our prominent citizens. With a church in our rear and a soldiers' monument in front we ought to be religious and patriotic.

From the tower we get delightful views, for from this elevation a lovely natural cyclorama reaches out for miles in all directions. We get a full view of Glens Falls and its broad, shaded streets, the outlying farms and country, and to the north and west is the semi-circle of considerable sized hills which would be called mountains in other places, being really spurs of the Adirondacks reaching out to environ Lake George and to protest against the passage of the Hudson to the sea.

Yonder is French Mountain gap, through which now runs a fine highway and the railroad to Lake George, and where, in the long ago, moved the trade and commerce and travel between New York and Canada, and the various forays, expeditions and armies of the Revolution and the French and Indian wars. Just around the shoulder of the mountain is the Col. Williams monument, marking the spot where the founder of Williams College fell in the "Bloody Morning Scout," pre-

ceding the Battle of Lake George the same day, September 8, 1755. To the southwest, plainly seen, is Mount McGregor, where General Grant died.

A little east of south are the plains of Saratoga and, distinctly visible, the tall battle monument at Schuylerville, where was fought one of the decisive battles of history.

Further east are the fertile valleys and hills of Washington county, and more towards the north is the valley of Lake Champlain with Vermont and her Green Mountains beyond.

Such in brief is the rural and historic view which awaits any of our friends, who will call on us. On a bright, clear day it is a far-reaching, beautiful and varied "sweep of vision." — *Aug. '91.*

* * *

THERE IS a large waste of energy in just discussing insurance evils.

* * *

A FLOATING debt is no help to an agent in trying to keep his head above water.

* * *

SOME AGENTS with a single company have too many.

* * *

IT IS A great incentive to both honest and dishonest effort — the pressing consciousness of needing the money.

* * *

NOT ALL who think they think, think thoughts.

* * *

IT WOULD be a mistake not to make some of our mistakes.

* * *

YOU CAN'T be whole-souled in a half hearted way.

* * *

THE BEST laugh is the laugh that lasts.

* * *

THE WISE man gets an idea in his head; the foolish man gets it in the neck.

* * *

THERE is much iteration of the obvious among insurance men.

* * *

MANY are too sanguinely sunny to save up for a rainy day.

* * *

WHAT'S THE good of a wonderful brain if you haven't common sense enough to make good use of it.

* * *

TALKLESS thinking is better for most purposes than thoughtless talking.

* * *

A CERTAIN field man calls some of his agents "yeast cakes" — because they raise the dough.

* * *

INDUSTRIOUS zeal is not only a good help to ability, but is often a good substitute for it.

* * *

THIS IS A GOOD SEASON for the energetic and sensible agent to do the most effective work, for his less energetic and less sensible competitor may neglect business to attend political conventions and rallies, and will from now to November give altogether too much time to whooping things up for his favorite candidates. There is no sense in forgetting business in the excitement of the presidential campaign, for when it's over there is no certainty who will get the local postoffice.

YEARS AGO it was said of a retiring insurance president: "He became president against much opposition, but retires with approbation of all."

* * *

I THINK you have treated me mean," said an insurance agent to a competitor, "in taking three out of the four policies which I have a long time carried for Jones & Co." "Pardon me, I did not know about the other policy."

* * *

A MUCH APPRECIATED old agent of ours, who drops into rhyme as easily as he writes a good risk, sends the following with a recent inclosure of daily reports. He evidently is a Presbyterian and interested in the current topic of "revision."

The Old, True and Tried
 Having gotten inside
 Of quarters convenient and new,
 Makes an annual report
 Of the same old sort —
 And this she'll continue to do;
 For in her new home
 No changes should come
 In her established decision;
 Her creed of election,
 Inspection, selection,
 Is sound, and needs no "revision."

The risks herewith sent,
 With best of intent,
 Belong to the very "elect";
 And I'm sure that you
 Will accept and renew,
 Whatever else you reject.

— Aug., '92.

* * *

INSURANCE COMPANIES, it would seem, are expected to bear the burden of loss caused by the introduction of inventions and new schemes for heat and light and their addition to the fire hazard. Some of these things have proved very costly, especially during their experimental period. This has been true in the past and it is true now of the electric light, which is yet only an experiment notwithstanding its success as a fire kindler and loss creator. Insurance companies are generously protecting property owners from loss on account of cheap, bungling, faulty and ignorant work of the electric light companies.

How great the darkness is on the subject of electric lighting will somewhat appear from the following extract from the report of the Committee on Electricity of the National Board made at its last meeting:

"But when we come to talk about electricity, its uses and beauties, its properties and its dangers, your committee could fill volumes in telling you what they do not know. And herein lies our present trouble. There is so little that we do understand about electricity, and our ignorance is so dense that we may well stand appalled in the presence of dangers which we know are great, but the magnitude of which we are too ignorant to appreciate." — Aug. '92.

BLESSID ART INSHURENCE

OR THE

FIRE-FIEND OF HOG HOLLER

A DRAMAR SPECTACULAR—IN 2 ACKTS AN 3 SPECTACULARS

BI BOSH JILLINGS

ACKT No. I

SCENE I. MR. A. SWINE, *Manufacturer of Patint Hog Yokes, sittin in his Library, with no libers 'cept his ackount books and lots of bills payable on the tabil, and a troubled countenance.*

Mr. Swine. (Solus.) I'm r-r-ruined —financhily busted!

The hard ernins uv my bounty dicker
An card speculashuns and similar
Enterprizes, gone "whar the woodbine
twineth."

O, that, (with reazon) my nabor's
daughter

Can prouder be than my Matilder Jane.
Kus-s the patinter of hog yoks. "It
was cheap,"

He sed, "the factory, stock and patint
rite

And ten thousan yoks completid," fur
which

I gave ten thousan dollers an sum
sense.

"The price uv yoks, retail haf-dollar
each,"

He sed 'twould make me ritch. He lied,
he did.

I've multiplied mi yoks bi 10 but a
Kord wunt bring \$5. My crediters
Wunt even call em assetts — the lowest
Name that things kin have.

I would tha wur on necks uv pigs an
Orf my hans. Dam yoks, orf I say!
I'm bank-r-ri-upt! (Come in Mrs.
Swine.)

Mrs. S. My deer what clouds yer brow?
Dus gout afflic or colic, sharp, your bow-
Ells grip?

Mr. S. 'Tis hog yoks that convulses
me;

Behold your husban's busted, financhily!

Mrs. S. What brings this suddin cli-
macs to our ills?

Mr. S. The futtin up uv these ere
unpaid bills.

Gaze on that TOTAL, wife, then tenderli
Gaze on me onct more before I dye.

Mrs. S. ' Don't say di, but tri and —
Mr. S. I try and pay?

Could hog yoks pay I'd do it rite away.

But there's no demand; tha will not sell
As hog yoks, pig yoks, nor e'en as fu-u-ell.

Mrs. S. Hold, you! A thot goos
scorchin thro my brain

Which lights that one word "fuel" all
a-flame!

(Mrs. S. vacillates around on tip-toe;
lox all the doors; puts down the kurlins;
listens at the kee holls, and then sittin
clos beside hur husban on the sofer, in a
whisper perceds.)

Mrs. S. Didst thou ever heer how
Inshurance Cos.

Hav releved distrest financhil woes?

Mr. S. (Springin to his feet excitedly.)

By hevings, wife, kum to these ar-
rums uv mine:

I dali see in U new charms devine.

Hents 4th leve off the cares uv hous;
instead

Make hog yokes onli. Thy metal fits
thee

For it. Thy whisperins fires my medi-
tashuns

With such a blaze that every yok uv
thirty

Thousan seems a igneus fortunus

To leed me whither thou sugges-test-tis!

Mrs. S. Hush; not so loud. Walls,
like asses, hev ears —

Mr. S. And makes my strong intent
grow sick with fears

That eyes an ears an cirkumstance
may pruve

The ruin uv our skeme — and us, my
luve.

Mrs. S. Banish all fear. The inter-
prize is bold,

An kalls fur brass, to change it inter
gold.

'Tis eazy done. See yu them silly moths
Thet swarm about yon candel flame, an
singe

Their wings — anon return to singe
again

An nothin learn from singeing? — Like
these poor

Sensless things so flutter myried* agints
Of Inshurance Cos., sacrificing all

Rules, experience, rates an prudence,
too,

To get a risk. Rite large sums; no askin

Questions. The larger the "commish" to them,

The crazier they ackt. Yu need not seek

Them. Keep still an silent an they will crowd

Upon you the means too mend yure fortune.

Mr. S. And then?

Mrs. S. Away to sum fur place — away

Some short time (an alabi to prove); the rest

I'll plan.

Mr. S. I am konfirmed. Now, let me set

My seal of admirashun on yure lips. Listen. This I'll do to aide yure purpos.

In quarrul I'll discharge a dozen men An give no reason fur it. Bitterly

They'l threten me of course. See how 'twill serve

In case of —

Mr. S. Yes, yes, I see. Now you look Yureself agin. The same old smile, improved,

With which you woed and won me, radiates

Yure features.

Mr. S. An lited by the same old luve. Good nite. Good nite and ples-ant dreams.

(Mrs. S. *exhult. Old Swine lites a segar, an holdin the blazin paper in his fingers soliliquizes.*)

Mr. S. Is this

A fire I see before me? — an started

Bi my han? See in its lite a dozen

Policies, aggregatin big! I'll clutch

Them. I have them not! Eh! not sensibul

To feelin as to site? I'll make them mine,

You bet. Matilder Jane and evry Swine Shall splurg and florish hier and hier, For we will be refined — refined by fire!

(While dancin roun the room to musical snaches from Shoofli, the kurtin kums down.)

AKKT NO. II

SCENE I. (*Old Swine sittin in his office in one corner of his factory. Enter Mr. Flint, an insurance agent.*)

Mr. Flint. Good mornin, Mr. Swine. Pleasant da.

Mi stars! how you air pilin up the stock. Good deal of properte here, Mr. Swine. Yes.

Carry mutch Inshurance, Mr. Swine? Mr. S. Trifle

On bildin; very little on stock. Fact Rates air hi, an feelin tolerable safe I run the risk.

Mr. Flint. That's hardly prudent, Sir, Not quite. Cairful no dout, but yure exposed

Bi negligent nabors. A little spark, A lightnia's stroke — burns up all, Sir. You want

The benine protection of Inshurance. Remember Jones' fire? — ruined him, you know.

I advise as a nabor. Let me see How many yokes hev you?

Mr. S. Some thirty odd Thousan.

Mr. Flint. Worth fifty cents a piece, I s'pose?

Fifteen thousan dollars. Your policies, Mr. Swine? — handy, I reckon? Thank you.

Only "\$4,000 on bildin"? "On stock Raw, wrot and in process." Why, Six thousand!

Is it possi-bel, Mr. Swine, pos-si-bel! "Other Inshurance is permitted," Sir.

Get it at once. Dear Sir, how can you sleep?

I'll give you better rate, Sir, much better —

One-forth of one per cent. better all roun;

Liberal policies in sound companies.

No applications — no kinks, Mr. Swine.

Mr. S. I can do a shade better on rates. Better by 25 cents. (*Aside.*) That's a lie.

I'm very cairful about fire. Afraid Of it — too good a biz to burn out, Sir.

Water handy, buckets and —

Mr. Flint. Bored rate is Much higher, Mr. Swine.

Mr. S. Dam the bored rate. Can't you and I tell what a risk is wurth?

No monopolizing about me, Sir.

Just fix me policies with proper sums, At rate I named. I've got some enemies,

You no, who might — well, its safe to be safe.

Mr. Flint. All rite, Mr. Swine. Two thousan more

On factory, eight thousan more on stock? Perhaps more? Eh?

Mr. S. Put it light. Indemnity From ruin is all I want.

Mr. Flint. Say twenty
Thousan altogether. Thanks, Mr. Swine.
Rate low, will try an squeeze it for you.
Thanks.

(Mr. Flint exheunt.)

Mr. S. So far, bully! Twenty thousan
dollers!

Poor fool, if I get haf in case of loss
'Twill do. No questions asked, no survey,
Nor even caution. He leads the way
Which he shud stop me from. Inshu-
ri-ence,

Yure a poor old friendless kuss

Goin on from wuss to wuss,

For those who dali eat yure buttered
bred,

Heap coles of fire upon yure calcined
hed.

(Kurtin kums down agin.)

(The dramar is kompleted by three
spectackular Tabluz Vivans as follers,
vis:—Three weeks elapses. 10 policies
hav bin issued. 10 dali reports bin re-
ceived bi 10 companies, 10-derli delatin
the splendinniss of Swine's hog-yoke
Factory—how he (Flint) took it from
10 other agints who wanted it at less rate.
Now kums)

SPECTACULAR NO. I. —

DESTRUCTION

Swine's hog yoke factory of Hog Holler
in the distance litein up the midnite ski
with flame. Large crowd gazin on and
doin nuthin. Two fire Ingins pourin
water on household goods saved from
exposed dwellings. Mr. and Mrs. Swine
and Matilda Jane in the foregroun, tearin
ther hare, shoutin "Ruin! Ruin!" an
refusin to be komforted. The roof falls
in, killen two men who have larg families.
Lots of red fire.

(Kurtin drops.)

(One day elapses. 10 telegraphs hav
bin sent to 10 offices; 10 spechuls hav
packed ther 10 grips an has10-d to Hog
Holler.)

SPECTACULAR NO. II. —

REPERATION

Mr. Swine standin in fore-grownd in
a kalcium illumination. A sickly smile
lites up his guilty kountenance surrounded
by ten spechuls in tiles with tin wings, on
bendid knees, holdin banners inskribed
"Prompt Payment," "Suddin Adjustin,"

"Non Kontestin," etc., and offerin full
payment of policies an beggin statements
of fair and satisfactory settlement, for
printin in noozepapers. In the back-
grownd the infuriated pepul is stonin the
representatives of the fust companies who
insured Old Swine for darin to demand
an investigashun of the fire. This spec-
tacle konkludes with a Ballet devertise-
ment of gaily dresst Inshurents agints
perioutin roun Old Swine, who konkludes
to accept payment in full.

(Some years go by and then the)

FINAL SPECTACULAR NO. III.

— RETRIBUSHUN

TOPHIT. The devil sittin on his thrown
in the midst of his Cabinet and Sulphur-
ous flames. A gong sounds and Mr.
Flint is ushered in, manacled with hog
yoks and scart. He crouches before the
Old Harry, who addresses him.

Saten. Ole Flint, on earth yuve had
yure fill,

Struk all the fires you ever will,

Thou skum of skuminess,

Thou tempter of thy race,

Look up at these here witnesses

Who meet you face to face.

(Gongs sound, when from adjacent
kaverns ther issues Mister, Mistress an
Matilda Jane Swine, hog-yoked, also
those fellows and ther families who was
killed at the fire, also 10 inshurence com-
panies gosts and the stoned, obstinate
spechuls and other folks, all shoutin in
chorius.)

All. We trace to you the kause

Of our deep damnation;

Now, midst hell's wild hurrahs,

We ask retaliation.

Fires burn and benzine bubble;

Fraud and arson, murder double;

Steelin, lyin, swindlin, truble;

All these, and more,

We do charge against this felon.

Forever, Satan, make him yell-on —

With pain to roar

Forever more! Forever m-o-r-e!

Saten. Imps of darkniss — I command,
10 years boil him, 10 years burn him

To begin with — then return him.

In the meantime I'll have planned

Proper doins for his conduct,

But just at present I am stuck!

(Kurtin kums down fur the last
time, finalee.)

THE PRINCIPLE OF CO-INSURANCE, old as it is, seems to have at last attained better recognition in underwriting practice. It seems to have come to stay and it is right that it should be so.

There never was any equity in the fact that two buildings of like value and hazard could be unconditionally insured, one at one half the premium cost of the other, for in case of loss or damage to each, less than the amount of the larger insurance, the cost of the indemnity paid would be decidedly unequal. For instance suppose two such buildings, each worth \$20,000 and the rate one per cent. Owner A insures for \$15,000, or 75 per cent. of value, and pays \$150 premium. Owner B insures for \$10,000, or 50 per cent. value, and pays only \$100 premium. Suppose a 50 per cent. loss to value happens to each during the life of the policies; the companies suffer a total loss in case of B and only a two thirds loss in case of A. Each receives \$10,000, for which the companies have received \$100 in one case and \$150 in the other case — a marked difference in the compensation for the same hazard.

The co-insurance clause is an equitable equalizer of this sort of inequality.

It does not oblige an insurer to buy more insurance than he thinks he needs, but does make him his own insurer to the amount which his paid for insurance falls short of the per cent. requirement of insurance to value named in the contract. — *March, '93.*

* * *

IT IS NOT AS EASY to force policies of cheap companies on the insuring public as it used to be.

That old land-mark of the business, “an adequate rate or no risk,” should not be removed.

A good rule to follow — Never make an endorsement on a policy by which the contract in any material point is changed; cancel and rewrite.

After the Chicago fire the cry went up to property owners all over the country, “sort out your policies.” It is just as applicable to-day as it was twenty-one years ago.

Never change the dates of policies as originally written. If, for any reason, a change in the term is desired, cancel and return the original policy, and issue a new one to expire at the date desired.

Partial interests of whatsoever nature they may be — “their name is legion” — are very unsatisfactory subjects of insurance and in nine times out of ten will tangle up even an experienced adjuster, in case of loss. — *March, '93.*

* * *

WE NEVER KNOW what we can't do until we try and then we often find that we can.

* * *

THE LATEST underwriting idea is the abolishing of preferred classes of risks by making all classes undesirable.

DID YOU carry any insurance, Mr. Flynn," asked the reporter, seeking information about the fire.

"I, loike a fool, I did not carry it," replied Mr. Flynn, "I left it in the house and it burned up wid the rest of me things."

* * *

A VERY CURIOUS LOSS was reported to this office a short time ago. The barnyard live stock had so eaten into a large stack of straw as to make a room in the stack large enough for a horse to enter and be out of sight. From some cause this stack caught fire and was consumed, and the owner was surprised to find the calcined remains of a valuable horse in the ashes.

* * *

IN WRITING UP this burglary," said the excited caller upon the local editor, "just mention that the thieves, in their haste, overlooked a quantity of valuable jewelry and silverplate."

"Might that not tempt the burglars to return and try it again?" suggested the editor.

"I don't care if it does. You see I don't want it understood that robbers can deliberately rummage all through my house and not get more than \$5 value of stuff worth stealing, especially as I have \$1,000 insurance on jewelry and plate."

* * *

IN WRITING POLICIES don't use the phrase "*to be* occupied by owner as a dwelling." Leave out the italicized words, which have a future sort of sound. Do not write "occupied by owner or tenant"—express the occupancy as it is. Do not give permit "to finish," or "to complete," without a time limit. Many buildings are never finished or completed and such a permit might continue during the life of the policy. Always give the full Christian name of the insured in policy and daily report.

* * *

BOSH JILLINGS gave this bad advice: "Git ure thrashing done by the inerscent steam ingine and set it on the wind side of ure barn, but put ure fire policy in ure pocket to show you ain't no phool."

Also: "Give your kerocene stove one more try, and let the stove pipe through your summer kitchen roof hev one more red hot and maybe an adjuster will come."

* * *

ADJUSTER—Mr. Jones, I am told that in regard to this burned dwelling, you erected it yourself. Now, sir, tell me when you erected it.

Colored Claimant—Boss, I nebber done wreckted dat buildin'—nebber. De fire wreckted it and I don't know nothin' 'bout dat fire. I lac ter know what fool been tole you I wreckted it!

* * *

A VERITABLE Irish bull showed its humorous horns in the circular of a certain manager who said he would not write vacant buildings *nor their contents*.

NOW, YOUNG GENTLEMEN," said the conductor of a Fire Insurance Summer School, "I have spent this morning's session in pointing out the GLENS FALLS as an object lesson illustrating our topic 'The Substantia in Fire Underwriting.' This company is an excellent example of modest ambition and conspicuous success and, in fundamental essentials of indemnity, is equaled by few and excelled by none.



"I am not able, however, to formulate theorems or predicate hypotheses which will surely promise the substantial results this company has achieved. It is an 'Old and Tried' corporation with more than a half century of

experience and the influence of this is much in evidence. I, therefore, can confidently commend to you the helpful importance of acquiring such an experience. Fifty years of practical dealings with the varied and varying exigencies of the business ought to somewhat indicate whether you are likely to succeed as fire underwriters, or not.

"As a contrasting lesson, we will to-morrow morning consider 'The Ephemera in Fire Underwriting,' dealing with Lloyds, Mutuels and similar substitutes for the real thing."

* * *

EINSTIEN (*examining Ikey's copy-book*)—Zay, ikey, who wrote dot line—"Nodding sugceeds like success"?

Ikey—Der deacher, fader.

Einstien—Dot deacher vos all wrong. Der vos nodding sugceeds like failures, unt lots of dem, mein poy. — *Truth.*

* * *

ADJUSTER—What are you folding that proof of loss so many times for?

Claimant—I always do that. The more times you fold it the more you find it increases. See?

* * *

INSURANCE AGENT—You say Mr. Jenkins was not in his office when you called. Did you leave that renewal receipt where he will be likely to notice it?

Office Boy—You bet. I stuck a bent pin through it and put it in his chair, point up.

* * *

ABOUT THE middle of January a well-known special agent met an officer of a certain fire insurance company and inquired during their conversation, "How did your company do last year?" "Here's our annual statement," responded the officer, handing out the docu-

ment. "Oh," replied the waggish special, "I have seen that, but, *honest now*, what *was* the result of the year's business?"

The special did not intend to insinuate his doubt of the accuracy of the figures, but with correct figures the conventional form of statements may give the present condition of the company, but nothing from which, on its face, any notion of the year's net experience can be gained.

The GLENS FALLS does not issue so complete an annual statement as it might, but intends to give sufficient detail for an intelligent and quick understanding of what the experience of the period reported for was, and for this reason, as well as for the experience itself, its statements have been the more appreciated by agents and patrons.

— March, '93.

* * *

MRS. CLAIMANT," said the public adjuster, whom she had employed to make up her statement of loss, "I'll change this item in your memorandum of 'fourteen flower pots at ten cents each,' to seven pairs of jardinières at five dollars a pair. Right words, Mrs. C., are as apples of gold in pictures of silver."

* * *

OUR AGENTS ARE CAUTIONED against insuring merchandising and trading companies, without full knowledge of the individuals behind the company name. We find that in some cases the wife of some bankrupt is all there is of certain companies of this sort, and in other cases the "company" is made to cover names too well known to underwriters to make their insurance acceptable. In many cases good men are doing business under the style of some company name, but be sure that such is the case before issuing our policy. Inquiry not long since resulted in the discovery that an "International Clothing Company," which recently started business in a western town, was the trading name of a twice burned-out and twice bankrupt-for-revenue scoundrel, whose real name had become a damage to him and a danger-signal to underwriters. In another case a high-sounding corporate name was the business *nom de plume* of one Sarah Ann McCorn, with Joe McCorn, her husband, as manager. The husband had once burned out and swindled his creditors. Sarah Ann had also tried to do the swindle act in her own name, and now both were masked behind a "Company" name in a new locality.

"Know whom you insure," every time.

* * *

THE NAMES OF WOMEN are sometimes used in business, for the purpose of covering the actual interest of husband or others who cannot do business in their own names, or for some other business dodge. There are companies that will not approve a risk written in a woman's name, preferring to lose the good of this kind rather than risk the danger of getting any of the bad. The GLENS FALLS will not write business hazards in the name of women without the fullest possible information, and will consider all doubts as against the writing.

In most cases, too, these women use the initials of their given name only, so that it does not appear whether they are men or women. A. J. Jackson may be Angeline J., or Andrew J. Jackson.

* * *

SOME AGENCIES HAVE a mistaken notion of the value of small risks. They esteem the commission hardly sufficient to warrant the trouble of soliciting them. The fact is, however, that these small risks of good character are the most easily cared for, most certain of renewal, and most reliable standbys an agency can have. There may be small pay in the first writing, but once on your books they are not so liable to be lost in the pressure of competition. Some years ago in a prominent city two young men started separate agencies. One moved for the large lines and scored a considerable success. The other was content to go slow and build up of the smaller business, which for a period yielded a small income. But the latter agency constantly grew under systematic and industrious efforts, while the other agency had to fight for its renewals, divide commissions with brokers and constantly lose his "target" risks, as they were subject to the competitive schemes of local and outside agencies. In ten years the "small business" agency had the largest and most certain income, and altogether the most independent position. With half the number of companies of the other agency he had made more money for them and for himself. He had lost none of his companies, while change was the rule in the other agency. Do not despise the small business if you would build up a strong agency. — *March, '93.*

* * *

THE HARDSHIP WHICH the credit for premium system is inflicting upon agents is more and more the reasonable complaint from all quarters. This has all come about by competition, one agent after another offering longer credit as an indirect discount of the rate.

It has gone too far, and we urge our agents to secure reform through local board action, in the adoption of a rule limiting the term of credit. Where there is no local board the same thing can be accomplished by an agreement between local agents. It is a matter of needed self-protection, for insurance should be a cash business. In fact, rates are made on the basis of the use of the premium, and the premium must be in hand if it is to earn interest. The burden of the credit business is now upon the agents, and we believe the remedy is in their own hands. We will be pleased to help in any way we can, for we will not give credit, and do not want our agents to be compelled to advance premiums. — *March, '93.*

* * *

WE INTENDED TO MAKE up one issue of *Now and Then* almost entirely with letters and extracts from letters of agents, expressive of their interest in and appreciation of the "Old and Tried" and its management. We fear, however, that doing this might appear like the use of "sweet confidences for self-glorification." These letters have been delightfully encouraging, especially in proving that business

relations may have much of the quality of personal friendship and mutual confidence. This is a feature in our agency relations which we desire and enjoy, and few companies have more of that sort of enjoyment than the GLENS FALLS. Sincere thanks for your contributions to this pleasant seasoning of business details, for it is much appreciated. — *March, '93.*

* * *

A COMPARATIVELY recently appointed agent writes us as follows: "I have the agency of nine companies in my office and I have felt like complaining, sometimes, that your rules were more strict than any of my other companies. But finding that your instructions always meant what they said, I decided to let you run your Company, and your annual statement justifies my conclusion that you know what you are about. I desire to add that my most liberal companies heretofore have evidently changed their minds, and are taking the other 'tack.' Their statements certainly indicate that they ought to make a change of some sort. Your business will be handsomely increased at this agency during 1893."

* * *

THERE HAVE BEEN CASES of fires when the polite noninterference of the colored brother in the following story would have been appreciated by the insured owner of the burning property.

The church bell sounded an alarm, and the populace ran pell-mell toward the burning building. There was no fire engine in town, and nearly everybody carried a pail. While an official of the county was making a break toward the burning building, he passed a strapping negro walking away from the scene of excitement. He had his hands in his pockets, and was whistling the "Mobile Duck."

"Yere, you black rascal, whar you goin' at?" the official asked. "Don't you see that Taylor's house is on fire? Why don't you go back and help to put the fire out?"

The negro stopped whistling. Drawing his hands from his pockets, he said: "I'se got great respect for Mr. Taylor, sah, but how does I know dat Mr. Taylor wants de fire put out?"

* * *

ALTHOUGH THE FOLLOWING is reported of another office, some of our agents may enjoy it all the same:

A local agent in writing his company concerning some agency matter, added the following: "Am sorry to say that my agency record for the year is broken, for quite a fire occurred here last night, badly damaging a block of four stores on Main St. About \$50,000 insurance and I have four policies involved." On receipt of this letter at the home office, the secretary concluded that his company must have two or three policies involved, and mentally "jumped on" the agent for not giving further information, or at least the policy numbers, and hastily wired the agent as follows: "Give, quick, the number of policies and names of companies in Main St. fire."

Back came the answer: "Sixteen policies and following companies," adding the full names of the companies and their location, in a forty-eight word message sent "collect." The secretary was now vocal in his denunciation of blundering agents, and wired again: "Give us the numbers of this company's burned policies." The answer, although

prompt, was not calculated to improve the secretary's opinion of the agent's comprehension. It read: "None of your policies burned. All safe in my office, two blocks from the fire."

There was now a secretarial storm, followed by this lightning dispatch: "About how much does this company lose by the fire, and by what policies?"

Answer: "You lose nothing — you were not in it. Who said you were?"

A sickly sort of smile now stole over the perturbed features of the secretary, and he charged up to loss expense the cost of telegrams.

* * *

MR. HINE, THE VETERAN EDITOR of the *Monitor*, in his "A Few Oddities of Insurance Litigation," before the last meeting of the Northwestern Association, said: "It has been repeated a thousand times, within the craft, and it is a thousand times, true, that no interest in the world litigates so small a proportion of the claims made against it as insurance." He went on and demonstrated by interesting statistics the conclusion that "the actual proportion litigated is really less than one third of one per cent."

* * *

A FRIEND, an officer of a competing company, writes of our recent statement: "I have always studied your statements, and find in them much to appreciate. The GLENS FALLS is certainly a unique company in its history, growth, and solidity, and it is surely because of an intelligent and painstaking management. My wonder is how thoroughly well the Company maintains its individual character against influences which tend to make us all so much alike." — *March*, '93.

* * *

A CORRESPONDENT WRITING of a severe lightning storm which visited a near by locality, after giving instances of many narrow escapes, told of a house that was struck by lightning and of plaster and chimney bricks falling upon its owner's head as he sat at dinner. He hurriedly concluded as follows: "His head was covered with bruises and a good deal of live stock was killed in that vicinity."

* * *

THE GLENS FALLS Insurance Company goes right along just as if nothing had happened, so far as one can discover from an examination of its annual statement. There have been no unusual fires, nor anything else unusual except it may be that the Company has had an unusually good year of it; but then, *that* is the usual way with the GLENS FALLS! There is something harmonious in a statement wherein both the underwriting and the investment accounts contribute even proportions to a profitable result. In these latter days the managers of a company incline to congratulate themselves if the premiums pay the losses and expenses, but in the statement before us the premiums did those two things besides providing for the increase in unearned premiums and the dividends, and a snug little sum in addition, leaving the investment earnings to swell the net surplus. This is a very comfortable condition of affairs, and we doubt if better results will be shown by any other company. — *Insurance Monitor* (N. Y.) *March*, '93.

THE NEWSPAPERS reported the burning of twelve churches during the cold weather of January, most of them costly buildings. There may have been others not reported. Churches have proved a loss to insurance companies, and we know of no other class of buildings in the heating and lighting of which there is so much of habitual carelessness. It ought to be otherwise.

* * *

THIS ILLUSTRATION is a combined photographic-snap-shot-phonographic-wireless record of the street car conversation of a couple of interested parties in a fire, water and smoke damage to a large stock of clothing in process of adjustment.



* * *

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE between the ringing of a church bell and a fire bell?" inquired the office boy, with a loudness incident to his lucid moments.

"Can't guess it," replied the bookkeeper, who was examining his moustache with a pocket mirror. "Spit it out before it chokes you."

"One calls the just and the other calls the adjuster."

* * *

AGENTS SHOULD understand that their commission does not confer any authority in matters of losses; therefore, when asked for instructions, the proper reply is that you have no authority to give any. Refer such parties to their policies and the loss provisions: such as in case of personal property, the separation of damaged from undamaged property, putting all in best possible order, and in all cases to protect the property from further damage. In other words, the assured should care for the property just as thoroughly as though there were no insurance, to save from contributory damage by neglect. Do not accept or receive any notices, proofs of loss, or other papers concerning the loss, advising that such matters must be sent to the Home or Department Office direct.

Under no circumstances make any endorsement, entry on or respecting any policy after a loss or damage thereunder, leaving the contract precisely as the fire found it.

Get at all the facts and circumstances possible concerning the fire, cause, origin, persons present, etc. See that books and papers are preserved, but be discreetly cautious not to commit the Company to any claim, course of adjustment, or action of any sort beyond your special instructions from the Company in the particular case.

OF THE FUTURE of the GLENS FALLS we need not predict. It is an American company, toward which any reasonable manifestation of national pride is not only justifiable but worthily bestowed. The harmony and ability of its management are demonstrated by its record, which, however, does not reveal the fact that early in its career a fixed line of policy was adopted, which has never been deviated from. By its adoption the patrons of the Company have enjoyed the full indemnity afforded by every dollar ever paid in premiums and all profits arising from its business of underwriting, the stockholders not enriching themselves at the expense of policyholders, the profits being neither drawn out in cash dividends nor capitalized. Taking into account the policy pursued and the success attending it, the popularity of the GLENS FALLS with the insurance public is easily accounted for. — *Rough Notes* (Indianapolis). *March, '93.*

* * *

KEEP WITHIN conservative insurance practices and avoid the crowd.

* * *

DON'T BE afraid of ruts made by the wheels of successful management.

* * *

THERE ARE agents who prefer taking poor risks to good advice.

* * *

FIREMEN are less interested in wireless telegraphy than in wireless streets.

* * *

THERE ARE insurance men who talk as if they were the sole exception to the frailties of their calling.

HALF-truths are often as misleading as whole lies.

* * *

SOME agency offices seem satisfied just to be connected with good owners of good property, by telephone.

* * *

SOME insurance stockholders have reason to consider a receiver as bad as a manager.

* * *

THERE ARE insurance men who have no use for opportunities unless they are automatic.

* * *

THE USE of magnifying glasses in examining daily reports won't increase the rates.

* * *

A HUSTLING business patron of a certain agency office called in a hurry about an insurance matter, and finding that the agent was out, asked his clerk, "When will Mr. — be in?" "Really," drawled the clerk, "I haven't an idea." "Haven't an idea! Well, you look it," and the hustling caller hustled out.

* * *

A NEW AGENT recently sent in a daily report of a poor risk at a very low rate. In declining it we inquired why he had approved it, and were surprised at the reply that he did not approve the risk or the rate, and that he was still wondering why three of his seven companies had accepted a line — one with thanks. He saved us further correspondence by adding, "Won't send you another risk that I do not wholly approve myself. I find that your office is not an experiment station."

We have a right to expect that any risk sent in by an agent has his full approval, unless otherwise appearing in the report.

WHENEVER ANY INSURED party or insured property shall during the life of the policy come within any of the Company's prohibitions or objections, or become so circumstanced or situated as to be uninsurable, if insurance should then be applied for, please cancel the policy.

We have had the pleasure of thanking several agents of late for their thoughtfulness in canceling policies on risks which had developed unpleasant indications. They are agents who have "the habit of making it a practice of taking notice of what they observe."

* * *

WHEN YOU UNDERTAKE to cancel a policy be sure that you succeed. The receipt of the assured for the return premium is absolutely indispensable, and should be taken on the canceled policy.

The mortgage clause should under no circumstances be attached to a policy covering on chattels. Its only proper place is on policies covering real estate, and not then in all cases. Encourage the use of the simple payee clause.

There may be cases where it would be proper to consent to an endorsement recognizing a chattel mortgage on a stock of goods, but they are so rare that we prefer following the good, old conservative rule, to terminate our liability whenever such mortgages are given. The filing of a chattel mortgage by a merchant is generally speedily followed by his assignment for benefit of creditors. — *Occasional*.

* * *

FREE AS THIS COUNTRY IS, its citizens have to suffer for their opinions. There is the man, for instance, who believed he could insure in a local mutual cheaper than in an "old and tried" stock company, and, having suffered several assessments, finds his opinion has cost him something.

So, too, with those who think one company as good and safe as another, or that one agent is as experienced and intelligent as another, and so on as to many insurance things wherein men suffer for pure opinion's sake.

* * *

WHEN A SUSPICIOUS fire occurs in any locality it will be well if the matter is not forgotten after the insurance is paid. A little quiet bearing of the thing in mind may reveal the incendiary.

In May, 1891, the GLENS FALLS, with other companies, suffered a loss at Salem, Washington County, N. Y. The fire was evidently of incendiary origin. The matter was not forgotten, and circumstances began to point to a young man of the village as the incendiary. He was arrested last month, indicted a few days later, and shortly after pleaded guilty and was sent to state prison for twenty years. It was a credit to that community that the real criminal was discovered, and an advantage to it that the crime was punished. Some localities really encourage incendiarism by indifference to their local happenings, an indifference fostered by the false notion that insurance companies are the principal sufferers. Character is as important to a community as it is to an individual. — *March, '93*.

ONE OF OUR AGENTS sent out the following with his 1893 calendars:

Ring out, sweet morning bells, your notes of cheer —
 Ring in your hearty welcome to the glad New Year;
 But ring ye not at dead of night,
 To tell of smoke and lurid light —
 Of ruined homes and sore distress —
 Of flying forms in scanty dress;
 No, ring ye out that sweeter knell —
 My home's *insured*, and all is well.

* * *

MR. W. H. FRAZIER, of Philadelphia, the well-known "positive opinion" insurance inspector, has lately issued an interesting pamphlet, from which we are pleased to give the following readable extracts.

IT is often so little between no fire at all and a heavy loss that it is all important that we stop it in its incipency; therefore, keep a clean place and your fire buckets filled.

WHEN an authorized inspector calls upon you do not consider him an intruder. He has important business with you. If he discovers and points out to you a danger mark, it will, if you are an honest man, be as much or more to your interest as that of the insurance companies to have it improved at once.

READY and quick private extinguishing means are what is required, and it is probable that more fires are extinguished by the commonplace fire pail and water barrel than by all other means combined; therefore, do not neglect the fire pails. Everybody knows what they are; any degree of intelligence handles them.

DO not consider the insurance companies your enemies in any sense and special objects for oppressive legislation, in the way of excessive taxation, local licenses, etc., for all such extra expenses must be added to the premium rates you pay. All taxes of the kind eventually go home to you for settlement.

ALL forms of insurance are based upon the coöperative or mutual system; therefore, do not smile and feel disinterested when an account of a large fire ends up with "fully insured," for if you properly comprehend that you have or will be assessed to assist in paying that very loss, your interest in the matter at once appears.

IT is not a question of rates so much as it is a question of fires. The burning controls the rates; hence, the responsibility is entirely upon the property owners, as they alone can control the burning. Therefore, when ratings are made according to the hazard of each individual risk, no fault should be found with the rates.

MANY property owners are free to discuss faults in their neighbors' risks, but slow to recognize equally serious defects in their own. The probable reason for this is that both the danger point and its owner have grown up together; consequently, the owner is too familiar with it to recognize its true character, and should, therefore, thank his inspector friend for pointing it out to him.

ANY company insuring a given property for a given amount at the rate of one per cent. per annum (the average rate), could not afford to have it burn in less time than one hundred years. They would have to collect the full premium during that time to come out even, and then be allowed nothing for expenses but the interest on the premium money while in their hands.

FIRE insurance is designed to furnish indemnity against loss by fire from accidental causes, but not from willful neglect or gross carelessness; therefore, it may be understood that the management of insured property is closely scrutinized,

not only for the purpose of abating danger points, but to assist in determining its grade in the insurance market. You may understand that the higher the grade the lower the rate.

I VENTURE the observation, that, as poverty makes the most disagreeable and bristly of domestic animals as gentle as a lamb, and that, as one ear of corn will lead him across a bridge while in that condition, so it will be with some of the now puffed-up and bigoted managers of underwriting corporations — poverty will soon make them willing to turn to the schedule or any other means likely to prolong the existence of the institutions they have managed so badly.

WHEN the obligations of fire companies are extended to the backing up or becoming surety for practically all business operations for profit, prosecuted as they are in this country, by avaricious and unscrupulous traders of every nation, every proportion of capital, business ability, honesty, dishonesty, and venturesomeness, with much the larger proportion of irresponsibility and guesswork, the conditions are materially changed, and the wonder is how even so many of the fire insurance companies have so long survived the backing up of such trading.

OUR motto, "A dirty risk is a dangerous one," if adopted by the property owner as a standard, will almost invariably result in a satisfactory place for our inspectors to report upon, because with cleanliness naturally follows good general order; and we have the authority for saying, better your risks and lower your loss ratio and the insurance companies will quickly respond with reduced insurance rates. Increased loss ratio must be followed by increased insurance rates or there soon will be no insurance companies to do the business.

FIRE underwriting positively must become more of a skilled profession by many who are now engaged in that business to enable them to remain in it, and I will say here that notwithstanding tariff associations, schedule ratings, universal schedules, or other systems, it will still be impossible to remain long in the business without that skilled knowledge. The margin for possible profit is now and will continue to be too small to admit of the old hap-hazard way of operating in this line.

This skilled judgment will not only extend to the matter of determining what kind and class of fire hazards may be insured against, and what proportion of the real value of property it will be safe to insure, but at what periods to increase or decrease, or at least hold at a standstill, the volume of business that a company should do, else the moral hazard and hazard of extreme competition will continue to be an insurmountably disastrous element in the result. — *Aug. '93.*

* * *

THE PARTISAN OFFENSIVENESS of the following political parallel is quite endurable. It shows that there is good sense on both sides, on some subjects:

REPUBLICAN

"The late change in the political complexion of the federal administration has relieved me of the postmaster-ship, and I now propose to give my best endeavors to building up the Glens Falls' business here. The postoffice was a mistake, and am sorry your business has not grown. But I shall make it up and give you a handsome increase this year. I have sent considerable new business already and trust it pleases the 'Old and Tried' administration. Politics bring changes, but the G. F. goes on forever, and count me with you for awhile."

DEMOCRATIC

"Grover is in the White House and is going to do his best. I am in the insurance business and am going to do *my best* to give you the largest and best business this year that you have ever had from this agency, all in honor of Grover and the Glens — for they are two capital G's. — Both have been tried, both are successful, and both at the head! and going to stay there. But as insurance is better and more reliable for family use than politics and post-offices, I shall hurrah for Grover and work for the Glens and the undersigned." — *Aug. '93.*

A NOTED defrauder of fire insurance companies confessed on final conviction that his criminal career was suggested by a profit which he unexpectedly realized on a small accidental fire damage to a stock of goods through the "jump" settlement of a lazy-smart adjuster.

* * *

THE MIKADO "TRA LA" is old and poor poetry, and so is this deviation, but there is something in it, after all:

The agent who sits in his chair, tra la!
 And waits for a risk to come in,
 Is not on the road to success, tra la!
 But is apt to get left in the end, tra la!
 And find that his income is thin!
 And that's what we mean when we say or we sing:
 "Oh, bother the agent that's always waiting!"
 Tra la, etc.

This agent must not feel aggrieved, tra la!
 If some one more lively than he
 By himself or his agents scoops in, tra la!
 What he has been waiting for long, tra la!
 But has failed to write up, don't you see?
 And that's what we mean when we say or we sing:
 "That in future this agent should keep on the wing."
 Tra la, etc.

* * *

NO THIS IS NOT just the kind of house I wanted," said a suburban resident, showing his new residence to a friend, "but it seems to suit the architect very much and proves exceedingly attractive to insurance agents."

* * *

THE QUESTION OF using the sixty days' privilege named in policies as to all losses other than small damages, is being discussed by companies as a needful rule for these times. When it is so difficult and costly a matter to raise money on even good securities, the "sudden adjustment and prompt payment" habits of companies might offer the incendiary odds as against the loan broker in raising funds, both as to quickness and cost. Certainly there is at this time much idle, unsalable and sparable property bearing insurance written under more favorable conditions. Even savings banks are using the sixty days' privilege against their depositors. At any time, sixty days is not too long for honest claimants to wait, or dishonest ones to worry.

— Aug. '93.

* * *

ALL OVERINSURANCE is not to be charged as the fault of agents or inspectors. There are cases, as of reduced stock, declining markets, spasmodic or unusual depreciation, etc., when a fire will find an overinsurance which did not exist when the policy was delivered. Neither is it an evil so prevalent as formerly, partly to the credit of agents and partly to the credit of property owners, for a prudent, level-headed, honest property owner does not want to risk the inference which a possible fire of unknown origin coupled with decided overinsurance might create.

But it can and should be still further minimized by greater care in granting insurance, and by more deliberate and painstaking adjustments, for when it is well understood that true values will be arrived at in case of loss, insurers will not pay premiums for overinsurance.

* * *

WHILE BELIEVING THAT there is a very perceptible and decided fire loss chargeable to moral hazard, we think it overestimated by many underwriters, and certainly when much of the late large increase in the loss aggregate is charged to this account. The decided changes in the physical hazard with which we deal — construction, large areas with varied occupancies, electricity conducted through our towns and cities, and into and through buildings, new methods of heating, new fuels, etc. — have created an increased general fire hazard, which has not been met by increased fire facilities or increased rates, and increased rates are about the only means of self-defense which companies doing a general business have.

* * *

WE DO NOT BELIEVE in the idea that some good risks may be written at any rate, or that any bad risk can be written at some rate.

* * *

ASIDE FROM THE plain, first sight evils of overinsurance, we know of nothing so hurtful to an agency as the embarrassment, trouble, and often dissatisfaction arising from the most honorable adjustment of losses on overinsured property. Locally the fault seems to center on the agent — part of the community blaming him for the overinsurance, part because the full insurance was not promptly paid, and the residue knowing something of the trouble and nothing of the facts think they would better let him and his companies alone. We have known the business of prosperous agencies practically broken up by a series of adjustments made troublesome by overinsurance.

* * *

IT IS WELL to keep a string tied to policies you issue until you *know* they are to be paid and the company accepts. — *Once in a While.*

* * *

LOCAL AGENTS could render considerable service to the business by an active interestedness in their local fire departments. There are many little things that their influence could secure which would add to the working efficiency of their fire service. They have a right to be heard, and in cases of negligence or defects they can easily have the backing of their companies, if needful, to secure required improvements. Do your best to keep your fire department up to its best possible equipment for quick and efficient service.

* * *

A CLAIM for a cow killed by lightning under a policy item "on young cattle," was explained that "the cow was so old as to be in her second calfhood."

THE GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS vetoed the valued policy bill recently passed by the Legislature of that State in a decided manner. He "sat down" upon this promoter of incendiarism so severely that its legislative supporters ought to wonder at their conduct. It takes a good while for correct notions of fire insurance to get into the mind of the average statesman, and we are glad to note that the executives of Pennsylvania and Illinois have well-conceived ideas of the effect and influence of the valued policy law. — Aug. '93.

* * *

REMEMBER THAT IT TAKES very little poor business to adulterate an otherwise first-class agency record. It proportions about as the whole amount of poor risks written bears to the premiums received on the good. In other words, a thousand dollar policy on a poor risk very decidedly hazards a thousand dollars of premiums received on good ones. A poor risk, therefore, somewhat looms up in the monthly business of even a large agency.

* * *

THE FUNNY MAN of the *Detroit Free Press* some years ago, commenting on a lecture by Colonel Ingersoll, reasoned well upon two important subjects as follows:

"After all, Robert, you are talking to a business people who do not take risks — especially fire risks, for *they* insure. If you are right, you won't have a cent's worth of advantage over the Christian; but if you are wrong, ah! Robert, how you will get left, and it won't be a cold day, either. That, you may say, is a cowardly view of it, but it is the business view of it. A merchant, as your phrase goes, 'doesn't know' that his store will burn down, but he doesn't take any risk in the matter. He takes out an insurance policy. That is not cowardly; it is mere business foresight. Now that is why a man would be foolish to take your way. The Christian merely takes out a next world fire insurance policy. If there is no fire, why he has had his protection; if there is a conflagration, he realizes on his policy, while on yours, Robert, we would write: 'Total loss; no insurance.' 'But,' you say, 'if I find I was mistaken when I reach the next world, I will go frankly to the Almighty and admit that I was wrong.' Well, I suppose, under the circumstances, that would be the only thing left to do. I don't see why it wouldn't work in this world in the beautiful allegory I have indicated above. Why shouldn't the merchant, the morning after the fire, go frankly to the insurance companies and say: 'Gentlemen, I was mistaken; I admit it. I have been a good moral merchant, never cheated my customers, lived a better life than the man next door. I honestly believed that there would be no fire, and now, gentlemen, do the square thing. I have frankly acknowledged my error. Please hand me over a check for \$50,000. Next time I'll take out a policy.' Of course the insurance people would at once write out the check. It would be just like those generous, impulsive fire associations! 'No Robert,' to quote from a favorite lecturer, 'it won't do.'"

* * *

HOW DO YOU arrive at the value of the buildings you insure?" inquired a special agent of a newly appointed farm agent.

"As the company does not want to insure for more than two thirds value, I add one half of the insurance wanted to itself, which gives the value," was the mathematical reply. This is rather an improbable story, but strange things have actually happened in the diversified practices of the business.

WE FEEL JUST NOW actively prudent, but not "panicky." We have confidence in the business and confidence in human nature. We do not believe that all insurance which present depreciated values render even excessive, will bring fires, nor that much of it will. We believe that most men cannot be moved from their *own* measure of moral rectitude, even if some have doubtful interpretations of commercial integrity under deviating influences.

The present often mentioned "financial stringency" does not demoralize us, neither should it be overestimated by agents. It is better to strengthen confidence than to breed distrust.

All the same, the insurance weather is just threatening enough to suggest watchfulness and carefulness, and the value of charts and compass to the insurance mariner. The business has been running so far from satisfactory in ordinary weather that we must look out for storm influences.

Just let all the "Old and Tried" crew keep "on deck" and do their level best to sail safely, even if others pass us on a different tack. We are not in a race to "get there," but want to look seaworthy when we arrive. — *Aug. '93.*

* * *

HOW IT WOULD RELIEVE the fire insurance loss account if companies could escape losses on risks which ought not to have been written, or even those which would not have been written had as much been known about them before writing as easily might have been known.

* * *

LEVINSKI — "Vas dot drue dot Chicago vas really set on vire mit a cow?" *Chicagoian* — "Yes, sir; that's history."

Levinski — "Dond you know vere I could bought me a cow of dot same preed? I could use dot kind of cow in mine peeziiness." — *Truth.*

* * *

REFERRING TO A "kicker" agent who would not join the local board, a German member said, "Birds mit one fedder goes mit demselefs."

* * *

A FEW DAYS AGO, says a traveling man, "in passing through a town which had been badly wrecked by a small hurricane. I met a man who had protected himself against loss by cyclone, and who was able to survey the ruin of all he possessed on earth with the utmost complacency, while his neighbors were almost distracted with grief. The sentiments of the neighbors toward this fortunate man were quite interesting. One or two, of course, were small enough to be jealous of him and to tell anecdotes of how some folks had more luck than they deserved, but the majority spoke more in admiration than envy, and there seemed to be a general sentiment that the man who had thus provided against danger in the midst of safety was the most suitable man in the district to run for Congress." — *N. Y. Tribune.*

* * *

INASMUCH as the business of fire underwriting is a perpetual experiment, and the lessons of experience are constantly presenting changes, if not entire reversals, by the advance of science, chemical discoveries, changes in process of manufacture and uses of materials, new modes of building, new methods of lighting and fire extinguishment, etc., it behooves the fire underwriter to bestir himself if he would keep pace with the age and keep in step with the onward march of events in his own peculiar sphere. — *The Chronicle.*

WE DON'T KNOW what the following means, but it reads like the prospectus of a new scientific insurance discovery:

First, by exciting the sympathetic concordant force that exists in the corpuscular interstitial domain, which is concordant to it; and second, after the concordance is established, by negatizing the thirds, sixths, and ninths of this concordance, thereby inducing high velocities with great power by intermittent negation, as associated with the dominant thirds. Again, take away the sympathetic latent force that all matter is impregnated with, the connective link between the finite and the infinite would be dissociated, and gravity would be neutralized, thereby bringing all visible and invisible aggregations back into the great etheric realm.

* * *

THE LAY press is "airing" a variety of proposed fire insurance reforms which are about as "remedial" as advising a man afflicted with hay fever to marry a grass widow.

* * *

I THINK a horse is the most intelligent animal," remarked Colonel Yerger.

"No, sir, the horse is not. The rat is the shrewdest and smartest little animal I know of. It has a wonderful power of discrimination. The rat never sets fire to a store by nibbling at matches until everything is insured for more than its value. A rat who is in that line of business is sharper than a fire insurance agent with a sixty-ounce brain and thirty years' experience. — *Texas Siftings*.

* * *

A CERTAIN POLICY FORM, it is reported, covered by one of its items, "on provisions, groceries, and fuel while contained in the family." An average clause would be helpful to equalize the liability between meals.

* * *

WATCHMEN DISAPPOINT in more ways than one. A railroad sawmill, compelled to shut down on account of no pine, had as watchman an idle, drunken fellow, who the owners had a hope would through carelessness cause the mill to be burned; it was insured. They waited long, and at last the glad news came that the pine camp had been burned to the ground, but after a day given to rejoicing, the following telegram was received by the owners: "Pine camp is in ashes; but fortunately, at the risk of my life, I have saved your mill. Watchman." — *Ex*.

* * *

INSURANCE AGENT—We'll have to raise Typer's premium. He uses benzine in his composing room.

Examiner—He told me that he didn't. Said he used lye.

Insurance Agent—Well, the only lye he uses is the one he told you. — *Truth*.

* * *

JOHNNY—"What does the paper mean, pa, by saying that Mr. Tomlinson bore the loss of his handsome property by fire very philosophically?" *Johnny's Pa*—"Humph! it means that he was insured." — *Chicago News Record*.

* * *

IT IS NET "surplus" more than capital which should be the test of solvency of an insurance corporation. It is this item which divides solvency from insolvency, and the broader it is, the greater the distance from liquidation. — *The Visitor*.

* * *

THERE ARE a few Lloyd organizations still in the business of fire insurance, but the preference was never more decidedly strong than now for unalloyed insurance.

THIS FORLORN man in his forlorn office thinks he has been practicing insurance for many years; but the kind he practiced and the way he practiced compelled him to practice economy. His great mistake was an early and afterwards cultivated conceit that "Business should seek the man and not the man the business," and another mistake was like unto it that a cheap kind of insurance would sell itself, when in fact it "sells" its buyers.

* * *

THE SUBJECT OF RATIOS is interestingly discussed in the December number of the *American Exchange and Review*, and while holding that "ratio is the greatest instrument of insurance exposition," reference is made to a few examples showing how widely apparently serious insurance ratios go astray in having as proportions about the quality of "If half a peck of apples be worth ten cents, what's a bushel of turnips worth?"

It certainly is strange how much in this line passes as rational and reliable in demonstrating fire insurance experience.

Ratio of annual losses paid to premiums, the latter often gross and without reference to when the losses occurred, or to increased or decreased unearned premium or of unpaid losses; of expenses to premiums, without an analysis of either; of comparative annual ratios of companies, when some of the figures are for the full calendar year and others ending with the November or other dates; even ratios of net surplus (which are usually the simplest and most satisfactory), without noting how much there is of appreciation or depreciation in value of assets, or what other chance nonunderwriting factors are included, and so on.

It requires some investigation and analysis to make ratios which can be depended upon for underwriting instruction and relied upon as underwriting experience, and yet how few go behind the ordinary reports and their indiscriminate averages. — *March, '93.*

* * *

THE GLENS FALLS has one enthusiastic and peculiar patron who regards its policy as a sort of "mascot" against fire. He is the owner of various kinds of property in various parts of the country, and says he never suffered by fire in case of any property on which this Company had a policy. He, therefore, insists that the GLENS FALLS shall take a line on every piece of property he has, and in case it is of a kind which the Company does not desire, he has asked for so small a policy as \$25, so as to secure the immunity from fire which he thinks our policy gives. We wish our policies really did have this quality.



LOOKING BACKWARD" is sometimes a pleasant thing to do, and we make the following extracts from our old circulars to agents. We often used the circular-letter form of "talks" with our "family" in order that we might think alike.

From Circular 175: In the serious aspect of the business generally, we have felt compelled to give painstaking attention to the details of all our transactions. You may think us overparticular in some things and mistaken in others. It is altogether likely that we have often been in error, but trust that when we did err it was on the side of safety. We keep the one idea constantly before us of saving the Company any step backward, not apparently, but actually, that it may unbrokenly continue to merit the confidence it has so long and so largely enjoyed, and this cannot be done in these times by driving with a loose rein.

From Circular 178: Appreciation in the market value of assets is a misleading factor in this year's statements. This is liable to be wiped out by the fluctuations of a market easily influenced by conditions. Earnings of assets, too, promise to be reduced by the tendency to a lower rate of interest, which is the cause of appreciation in value of the higher interest-bearing securities. These, with lower rates, increased taxation and fees, added local and state legislation burdens, and a natural increase in the expense account, are considerations not to be despised by a business wherein so small a margin of profit prevails.

All these things are submitted for the thought of our intelligent agents, that we may together understand that the great business in which we are so earnestly engaged requires the honest, thorough, and deliberate efforts of officers, managers, agents, and even insurers, to the end that it may be fairly remunerative to capital and provide not only safe ordinary and everyday indemnity, but also provide for such extraordinary demands as the absence of serious conflagrations and decline in market value of assets, for many years, may incline us to forget to count among natural expectations

From Circular 182: As we have tried to show, the year has proved less satisfactory than some offices are trying to believe. An increased business does not mean prosperity, by any means. Competition has been unusually severe, reckless, and provoking. The struggle has been desperate to hold and get business, resulting in a demoralizing conflict all along the line, and it is an open question whether the loads which some offices have gathered may not prove grievous as the average of loss begins to reveal itself.

Our agents will bear us out in the statement that this office has in no wise contributed to the unpleasantness of the situation. We have, no doubt, seemed to you at times unaccommodating, and even unreasonable, in refusing to hold our own risks at rates which other companies seemed satisfied with. We have appreciated your situation, but, gentlemen, it has plainly seemed to us the only safe course to pursue, and we confidently believe that time will prove it. In being mindful of the present we must not forget the future, and in doing this we serve you as well as the Company. We cannot reform the whole business, but we can apply our own business convictions to our own transactions.

Trying as the year has been, we have never had better agency service — a service which has, against odds, increased our business, and in such a way and of such a kind as to make our enlarged unearned premium fund promise a profit. That is the quality which makes increased premiums desirable.

From Circular 186: Thanks for evidences of your good will and confidence. Our half-year's premiums exceed all previous records, and it is all the more pleasing because we have made no demand for increased business, nor bought any; neither has the Company, or its agents in its name, contributed to the unreasonable things born of the all-pervading influence of this *get-business* period.

The experience of the year has been a schoolmaster of an expensive sort, and if the business was as sensitive to instruction as it ought to be, we might hope for positive reform soon. We will hope, anyway, and contribute all we can to make the business level-headed, even-handed, reasonable, and business-like, and, therefore, respected.

We respectfully urge your hearty efforts in behalf of securing adequate and uniform tariffs, better forms and practices, and of identifying the GLENS FALLS with every effort which may tend to show that it does not mean to let property owners or their brokers fix the price or make the forms of its policies to suit themselves.

From Circular 191: There is promise of improvement in the situation — good starts have been made, and it is sure to come unless prevented by the companies themselves. Agents and field men may not be more alive to the needs of the business than officers and managers, but they really show a greater willingness to unite and readiness to act. It is strange, but yet it seems true, that there is more hope of reform from the circumference of our business, than from its centers.

The days of appreciation in assets and of the profit from reinsurance reserve on term business, written at former better rates, which have deceived more or less heretofore, are past, and the full force of the conditions current for some time is sure to be felt. A little solemn experience with these results is likely to accomplish something towards a united purpose to redeem the business, and preserve the indemnity upon which such immense and varied interests depend.

But whether there is general unity or not, we are a unanimous unit in this purpose and effort. — *Nov. '93.*

* * *

OUR AGENTS HAVE our hearty thanks for their endeavors during 1891. Many of you have increased your business for this Company. Probably others made just as great an effort to do so. Thanks for what you did do and what you tried to do, and may the record for 1892 show that all succeeded in increasing, more or less, the business of last year, for, all things considered, we think this only a reasonable expectation. We want every agency alive and active, and will you please look over your record and see if you cannot speedily improve it, and at least to the extent that there shall be no "no business" reports for any future month. We are pleased with the pleasant indication in this direction which the new year has so far shown.

* * *

A CULTURED GENTLEMAN, speaking of a recent fire in his city, of decidedly suspicious origin, called it "a pyrophanous affair." Finding that the definition of "pyrophanous" is "made transparent by heat," we concluded it a good term to use for polite reference to a certain class of fires — those which revealed a previous preparation, cases where the motive is made to appear by the fire itself. But all the same, deliver us from pyrophanous claims.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING CLAIM of natal predisposition to incendiarism shows an inheritance bad enough to be placed upon the prohibited list. The culprit pleaded as follows: "My maternal grandmother was a pyromantic, my paternal grandfather was a pyrotechnist, my father was a student of pyromonics; in my younger days I was first a member of a fire company, and afterward fireman on a locomotive; so that all through my blood is the unresisting tendency to pyromania."

* * *

IT IS THE YEAR 1894 which now most concerns all of us who are interested in the Company's progress and welfare. For this year of grace all the other years of its history were made, so let us make the most of it. — *Feb. '94.*

THIS STARTLING "daily report" was lately received at the San Francisco office of a leading fire company: — "\$100 on his horse Speedwell; \$75 on grain therein; \$15 on hay therein; \$45 on phaeton therein." We have heard of horses who were said to have "eaten their own heads off," but we never before heard of such an omnivorous beast as this. — *Advocate*.

* * *

UNDER THE CAPTION "Only one GLENS FALLS — the Fact again Shown by Its 87th Semi-annual Statement" — the *Chicago Century* in a recent issue says:

Ever since its origin, in 1849, the GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY has conducted a business that has steadily increased in size and prosperity, and it has long since won the honorable motto, "Old and Tried." The insurance world to-day freely concedes that the GLENS FALLS is one of the solidest and most reliable fire insurance companies in existence. Fire may rage, financial storms may visit the land, but nothing can impair the strength of the grand old Company. . . .

"The Company observes the Golden Rule as part of its constitution and laws, to guide its policy and regulate its every transaction." — *Nov. '93*.

* * *

A DELAVAN, WIS., paper is authority for the statement that the recent fire in that town, which destroyed a considerable part of it, was caused by a meteor falling through the roof of a barn upon the hay therein. Are the stars in their courses and the comets in a conspiracy with the mundane fire-fiend to beat the record in piling up an appalling aggregate for this year of grace in the United States? It may be so. — *Insurance*.

* * *

CHICAGO'S BIG FIRE of twenty-three years ago was started by the kicking over by a cow of a kerosene oil lamp in a stable. The great fire in South Chicago, the largest suburb of Chicago, the past week, was also due to the explosion of a kerosene lamp. This time the lamp was being used by a woman to heat her crimping irons. It was Mrs. Sarah Gilles, wife of a master mechanic, who suffered this misfortune. She deferred a walk which she was intending to take, and looked with dismay upon the destruction of \$700,000 worth of property. — *Nov. '93*.

* * *

A COLORADO FARMER bored a hole in a post, filled it with powder, plugged it, attached a long fuse, tied a sick horse to the post, applied a match to the fuse, and afterwards tried to collect the insurance on the horse, on the ground that the post and horse had been struck by lightning! — *Insurance Times*.

The *post-mortem* revealed the above *post-facto* conduct of the *postulant*, and payment of was indefinitely *postponed*.

* * *

NOBODY will ever have all the money he wants to waste.

* * *

NEW-YEAR RESOLUTIONS. — It is better to be good once a year than to be bad all the time.

HOW IS YOUR SURPLUS?" is a test question in measuring an insurance company's annual experience; but direct answer is often evaded by round-about explanations as indicated in the following lines:

"How is your Surplus?"

"Well, sir, last year our business enlarged,
An increased reinsurance was charged,
Depreciation for ninety-three
Was a round and full deficiency,
While our loss ratio increasingly" —
"But, how is your surplus?"

"Surplus? Yes, sir, our business increased
On the Coast, in the South, West, and East.
And then, too, we had more losses unpaid,
While unearned premium, as I said" —
"But, how is your surplus?"

"You see, as we pushed things last year
It put our average out of gear —
But we did remarkably well
Compared with others — for, let me tell
You, all our items took a swell —
Well — yes — except surplus."

* * *

STORMS TEST THE SEAWORTHINESS of vessels, and to those who "go down to the sea in ships," there comes a sort of hearty confidence and pride in the staunch ship which despite winds, and waves, and weather always reaches port on time and in good condition. It is with some such feeling that those specially interested in the GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY hailed the record of its last annual "voyage," as coming within the realm of the expected and in line with that of previous years, the "tempest tossed" general experience to the contrary notwithstanding. We might say much as to how well prepared the Company was to endure such a severely adverse year as 1893 proved to be, but our present purpose is to thank our agents in all heartiness and sincerity for their coöperation and for their confidence in the management of the Company's affairs. We congratulate them that they have not been disappointed in the outcome for the year, and that they still have the unbroken record of the GLENS FALLS to present to their clients.

* * *

OF COURSE THE RECORD of the GLENS FALLS for 1893 was made during the year, and yet it is easy for this office to note the influence of the "doings" of previous years in the outcome of this. It is difficult to say just what the actual result of a company's transactions for a single year is, one year is so connected with another. The unearned premium fund is a sort of hiding place for real experience. If rates are sufficient, this fund ought to include a final small increase of surplus. If rates are insufficient, their insufficiency is covered for a period in the unearned premium fund, with a final demand upon surplus to make the deficiency good. Particularly is this true of term business.

THE PERSONAL GOOD character and reputation of the insured is a favorable consideration always, but it will not cover the bad character of tenants, or of the occupants or owners of exposing buildings. Neither does it count so much in favor of vacant or nonoccupied property, nor when the insured has suffered incendiary fires. Good men have enemies, even if they do not deserve them, and the property of good men is sometimes so situated as to invite the incendiary, the mischievous, and malicious to fire it. There is a varied and large moral hazard not personal to owners of property.

* * *

AGENTS CONTINUE to treat policies as if they insured the property described therein, instead of the party to whom they are issued. This is evidenced by endorsements given continuing policies in the name of the purchasers of the property, and even to Sheriffs, receivers, etc., without the consent of the real owner of the policy. Agents should remember that no such *ex parte* action on their part can change the policy owners' rights for return premium, or otherwise.

There is but one proper and safe way to transfer the ownership of a policy, and that is by a regular assignment duly approved by the agent.

* * *

JUST NOW COMES the familiar protest from several towns against the advance in fire insurance rates, because their particular towns have had a good fire record for a period.

It is likely that the majority of towns have such records, and of course it is the multiplied larger proportion of property that does not burn. If the fortune or misfortune of a small locality as to fire loss should be considered in adjusting rates, it would prove decidedly hard on a town which had suffered a conflagration, for instance. If rates should be so adjusted, why not come down to the finer point of fixing the rate on the property of an individual, or firm, or a specific risk, on the basis of their or its fire record?

But insurance rates cannot be narrowed down to such a basis. They must be adjusted to meet the loss requirements of a large field, on the principle that many contribute to pay the loss of the few.

The physical hazard of a town, its construction, fire department, water supply, its general fire preventive and fire fighting facilities and efficiency should enter into the adjustment of rates, but it is asking too much that its good or bad luck as to fires should very much influence local rates. That would violate the very purpose of fire insurance.

Some of these very towns now pleading their immunity from fire would not have to look back very far to find years when outside premiums were needed to pay their losses, and this may be the case next year. The fact is, that for a considerable period the premium receipts of fire insurance companies have not been sufficient to pay losses and expenses. Rates reduced by the competition and less loss ratio of former years, have not been sufficient for the increased fire loss.

Millions of dollars of surplus and capital have been used to meet the deficiency, in the brave hope of an improved loss average, but the year just ending has only aggravated the situation.

Every insurance manager and agent, and every business man at all familiar with the subject, knows that there must be a revision of rates if sound indemnity is maintained. This must be general, as nearly according to hazard as possible, but not according to local exemption, or otherwise, from fire.

What may be, rather than what has or has not been, is the point, so that this special plea, referred to for local exception to the general advance in rates, is not considered sound by experienced underwriters. — *Journal of Commerce*.

MAWNIN', BOSS. Mawnin'. Jeems Burns he tell me yo sholy fix me 'surance like I want it. Yo see, boss, I hed er fire whar I lib 'fore I cum here, and de 'juster he say my housen tings been shore 'nough moved out 'fore der fire an' der 'surance wa'n' no good no how on moved out duffle. He wus dat sassy I had ter leve der town.

Now, Jeems he say yo paid him 'surance on moved out tings, an' dat's jess wha I want — 'surance on housen stuff whar 'taint jess same as whar 'tis. I doan know nuffin' 'bout 'surance, boss, and jess frows myself on yo ig'rence to fix it dat er way.

* * *



MR. FRAZIER, the well-known Philadelphia inspector, has published a readable little volume with the striking interrogative title, "How is Your Surplus?" As he says, this is certainly a most pertinent and unusually important question just now. However complex or extended the statement of any company is, the chief point is finally reached, in its last analysis, by its answer to the question, "How is your surplus?" Surplus is the one item which, as a rule, indicates more than any other what all the others mean.

The financial responsibility of an individual is not in the amount of his income, but in his balance of income over expenditure; not in the amount of property he has, but in how much is it worth over and above his indebtedness and liabilities; and so it is with corporations. "How is your surplus?" is a proper form of inquiry after financial health — individual or corporation. — *Feb. '94.*

* * *

MY ANSWER to the question as to how some fire insurance companies are able to extract profit from the underwriting business year after year, through good, indifferent, and even in notoriously bad times, while others manage to lose money during the same period and on the same classes, could be given in four words — *they attend to business.* — *W. H. Frazier.*

* * *

THERE ARE here and there those who systematically secure insurance cheap, or for nothing, by the despicably mean method of holding their policies as long as the payment of premiums can be put off, and when forced to pay, will surrender their insurance for some invented reason, but not until they have secured policies from some other agent, repeating the same thing with him. Do not be swindled by any such "deadbeatism." Collect premiums, and if policies are surrendered, collect the earned portion.

PEOPLE who make fun of "has-beens" should remember that a has-been is far ahead of a "never was."

* * *

THE FOLLOWING LETTER is from a prominent and well-known observer and student of fire insurance experience and management:

I am just in receipt of your statement of December 31, 1893, which is positive evidence of an absolutely great achievement in fire underwriting during the past year. Without having data at hand as to your loss and expense ratio and that other one important item, known as "shrinkage" in the value of securities, that so many of the companies are just now taking refuge behind, I can only congratulate you upon your methods as a whole; that is, as Captains in fire underwriting, if to that branch alone your increased surplus is due, even if no diminution in the value of securities has taken place. To the extent that any such values may have decreased, to that extent your underwriting ability is, of course, increased. If the values of your securities have not appreciably decreased, then, taking into consideration the enlarged ratio of dividends that have been paid during '93, you have I think, earned the undisputable title of Napoleons in fire underwriting and in finance.

Again congratulating you upon such results in these times, I remain yours, and shall continue to advocate such a system as you evidently employ. — *Feb. '94.*

* * *

NOW AND THEN" is not an insurance journal by any means, only an irregularly issued gathering of "family" notes, and, if interesting at all, chiefly so to our own "folks." It does not, nor is it intended to take the place of any of the many indispensable insurance journals, one or more of which we trust is subscribed for and received by each of our agencies. This little paper has proved a pleasant method of communication with our agents, and simply takes the place of the circular letters we used to use. Correspondence has been saved by reference to its pages, where answers to questions asked are often found; in fact, it saves asking by answering in advance. Our agents seem to like it, and that satisfies us.

* * *

OUR AGENTS WILL OBLIGE us and other companies, as well as serve themselves, by keeping watch of insurance legislation in their respective States, and by posting their local representatives as to the effect, influence, purpose, etc., of such legislation. Few legislators are familiar enough with the business of fire insurance to see for themselves the scope of "job laws," or to discover the schemes or malice involved in them, and would welcome the views of their constituents who are in the business. Do not let your representative vote ignorantly upon any insurance bill which places a burden upon the business, as this burden must finally be borne by your clients in an increased rate.

* * *

DOES FIRE INSURANCE, legitimately administered, in any wise increase the hazard it assumes?" is a question which has been discussed lately in a certain locality. We think it does. One of the important and valuable considerations of the indemnity of fire insurance is that it frees the mind from care and anxiety as to the danger of

pecuniary loss by fire. The mind so freed naturally has less concern about the peril of fire, even to the extent of neglecting ordinary fire precautions and preventions — not purposely or willfully, but as the result of a sure indemnity against loss. Sometimes this may go so far that it is difficult to distinguish where mere indifference leaves off and criminal carelessness begins.

So, too, with insured communities. The fact that insurance largely or fully covers the danger of loss by fire lessens interest in providing means for the prevention and extinguishing of fires, and otherwise operates to increase the local hazard.

Several other considerations will suggest themselves along this line.

* * *

WHAT GROUND HAVE YOU,” inquired an adjuster of the claimant’s attorney, “for believing that these suspicious circumstances do not point to the insured as the incendiary?”

“Mighty good *ground*,” replied the attorney, “as I’m to have a deed of the lot if I collect the insurance on the burned dwelling.”

* * *

IT IS TO THE GLORY of fire insurance that it has quite altogether and fully met the increased demand upon it for the trying three years past, and especially during 1893. Millions of dollars of accumulated surplus and interest — earnings of investments — have been lost in discharging its obligations, but they have been discharged. What other class of financial corporations has done so well?

* * *

ANY AGENT WHO HAS REPRESENTED the GLENS FALLS for any length of time will know pretty well the classes of risks and size of lines desired, and can save cancellation by keeping within this knowledge. When a policy is ordered canceled because we have enough already in a locality, or because of its quality or rate, it is a loss of time and trouble to send another risk having precisely the same objection. Keeping these things in mind and sending full, complete, and prompt daily and monthly reports would save correspondence and make doing business more pleasant and easy all round.

* * *

IT WERE NOT BEST that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion that makes horse-races. Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example. Nothing so needs reforming as other people’s habits. — *Mark Twain*.

* * *

THE IRKSOMENESS OF CORRESPONDENCE is much increased by delay and postponement. Accumulated correspondence or other work grows to be an incumbrance — the bare thinking of things left undone which ought to be done being a burden of itself. Business inquiries answered with “spot” promptness leaves nothing of that sort to gather and disturb with its sense of neglected work. The prompt man always does his business easily.

WE MAKE THE FOLLOWING few brief extracts from recent correspondence:

WITH a twenty years' agency of the GLENS FALLS, as this now is, such a statement for 1893 as you send creates no surprise. It was expected. It is a pleasant thing to represent a Company with such a continuous one-sided experience on the right side.

WE no longer wonder how the "Old and Tried" is coming out, nor would we hesitate to go on writing policies, pending information, if a ruinous conflagration occurred. Your long-time even experience through good and bad years means "insurance doubly sure."

I USED to say "the GLENS FALLS is a lucky Company," but there is something besides luck in its record. I now know that it is a thoroughly well-managed Company that's all.

YOUR handling of this agency and of the business of your Company in it, is quite different from that of my other companies, but I long since ceased to criticize. Your statements all through the years differ so favorably from others that you very evidently know your own business very well, and you certainly attend to it very thoroughly.

AM glad to get one statement without explanation of how surplus was reduced. Your liabilities have increased and you had some of that "depreciation" so much blamed, but your surplus "is still there," by an increased majority.

WHEN we figure out what you make your assets earn, we don't wonder you want your premiums promptly paid. You certainly know where to put them so they will do the most good. You GLENS FALLS folks are good underwriters and good investors, and, of course, this makes a good company.

WE don't think you quite do as you are done by. It does not seem to make much difference with your office if other good companies are quoted as having lines on a risk at same rates, while some of our companies consider what the GLENS FALLS accepts as all right for them.

THE question you ask concerning risk under No. — is received, and after making the inquiry it is plain that we do not want the risk. I thought it a good risk, but it is not. It goes into another agency, for I canceled my other policies, although yours was the only inquiry, so you benefited them.

I MADE a little friendly wager last July that the GLENS FALLS would increase its surplus during 1893. I never take chances. Any one might have known that I had a dead sure thing.

THIRTY years is a long time to represent one company, in view of the changes which have taken place among fire insurance companies and agents. Bless the good health of the GLENS FALLS, she grows handsomer and stronger every year, and more worthy. I wish I could represent her thirty years longer. — Feb. '94.

* *

ONE OF THE HARDEST things in public affairs is to keep the brass band from mistaking itself for the entire procession.

* *

WITHIN A FEW DAYS we received policies from three different agencies canceled upon their own motion, because of unpleasant indications of the character of new tenants. It is pleasant to know that these agents have their risks and the Company's interests in mind, even after risks were written and accepted, and whether a loss is saved or not it was the right thing to do.

PROVERB TEXTS. — The wolf asked the goat to dinner, but the goat declined. — A fox sleeps, but counts hens in his dreams. — The wolf changes his hair every year, but remains a wolf. — Love, fire and a cough cannot be hid. — Make friends with a bear, but keep hold of the ax. — Everything is bitter to him who has gall in his mouth. — If you hunt two hares you will catch neither. — Praise not the crop until it is stacked. — It is not necessary to plow and sow fools; they grow of themselves. — Truth is not drowned in water, nor burned in fire. — A fool may throw a stone into a pond; it may take seven sages to pull it out. — No bones are broken by a mother's fist.

* * *

IT IS EASY to find out the speed when you are traveling on a double-tracked road. If you are curious about it hereafter, just look at the inside of the outer rail on the opposite track for a minute or two, until you find that you can distinguish where one rail joins another. Then count the joints, and as many rails as you pass in twenty-one seconds is the number of miles your train is traveling an hour. Try it and figure it out, and you will find it right.

* * *

THOSE WHO AIM at nothing will have the satisfaction of hitting it. **TACT** is often hypocrisy in evening dress.

* * *

IN THE REALM of the blind the one-eyed man is king. **IT IS** generously unselfish in some underwriters to admit that they are self-made, when it would be so easy to blame it on Providence, or heredity.

* * *

GOOD INTENTIONS are a kind of asset having no market value. **NOT ALL** fire claimants who stoop to low down things can be considered stupid.

* * *

AN AGENT can be wide-awake and not suffer from insomnia. **IT MAY BE** a mistake to go into the insurance business too young, but it is not likely to be often repeated by the same individual.

* * *

HE WHO CATCHES one fish gets more credit than he who buys a whole string.

* * *

THE MANY THEORIES of what is the matter with the business of fire insurance and the many remedies pointed out, suggest the story of the clock brought to a repairer for his investigation of why it would not run. While he had it in pieces and was wondering what the trouble with it could be, the owner returned with a distinct solution of the matter. It had suddenly occurred to him that *he had forgotten to wind it*. Perhaps some of our offices have been just as forgetful and neglectful of old and familiar necessities of the business, which being thoroughly applied would make things run more satisfactorily. Insurance is a most common sense business and needs common sense treatment.

THE FOLLOWING EMBODIES sound sense and true philosophy expressed in pleasing rime. A prominent and successful business man has always kept this verse conspicuously attached to his desk as an everyday reminder:

It never pays to fret and growl,
 When fortune seems our foe,
 The better bred will push ahead,
 And strike the braver blow.
 For luck is work,
 And those who shirk
 Should not lament their doom,
 But yield the play
 And clear the way,
 That better men have room.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING MIXED CASE is the result of an agent forgetting that there is more than one party to an insurance contract. A policy was issued to a party covering buildings, with loss payable to a named mortgagee. Policy was left with agent. Property was sold and the purchaser gave a second mortgage. This purchaser asked the agent to make the policy good to him and also make loss payable to his mortgagee instead of as before. This the agent did without assignment from the originally insured or consent of first mortgagee. One of the buildings burned and each mortgagee claims that loss should be paid to him, while the originally insured claims the unearned premium on his policy. It appears that all these claims can be enforced, and as the agent made the changes without the authority of the interested parties, it is likely he will be a sufferer from his careless transaction.

Many insurers and some agents think that a policy insures the property described therein, and that the insurance naturally follows the property in case of sale, etc., while the fact is it insures the party to whom issued against loss from the burning of the described property — the policy being his own personal property, no *ex parte* endorsement can deprive him of his rights therein. So, too, when loss is made payable to a mortgagee, he becomes a party to the contract with rights which cannot be changed without his consent. — *June, '94.*

* * *

A DISCRIMINATING German insurer recently returned Mutual policies to the agent with the remark, "Ven I carries mine own risk myselef, I dond vant to buy me certifigates of dot nonzence."

* * *

THE GLENS FALLS is just now enjoying some of the helpfulness of its history and reputation. Not only are property owners asking for its policies, but agents are anxious to "tie up" to it as promising to be an abiding institution and not likely to lose its excellent financial health and vigor. Our agents will make no mistake in making it known to all good insurers of good property where GLENS FALLS policies can be had. — *June, '94.*

IS THE UNEARNED PREMIUM reserve of all companies equally sufficient to carry out their risks?" is a question which one of our agents asks. It depends upon the adequacy of the premiums, which form the basis of the reserve. If a certain company's experience has been profitable through a series of years, and is known to require full rates, its unearned premium reserve may be counted fully sufficient, barring conflagrations. But if the company considered has had a losing record for a period, it is certain that its unearned premium reserve is not so sufficient to meet its loss liability as in case of the other company.

* * *

IT IS NOT ALWAYS unfortunate that we do not get what we deserve from our associates and fellow citizens.

* * *

CUPID may be primitive in dress and armament, but he is an industrious and successful little rounder-up of risks, all the same.

* * *

THE LATEST among unique causes of fire comes from Maine. One of the historical Adams family, a farmer of that state, placed a hot brick in a box containing an ailing turkey, for the purpose of creating a healthful summer atmosphere for the sick fowl. The hot brick started a fire which finally consumed two barns and a dwelling. Loss, \$3,000. It would have been cheaper to have sent Mrs. Turkey to Florida for a season. This roast turkey did not make a Thanksgiving Day for Mr. Adams or for the insurance company having the risk.

* * *

THE BUSINESS OF INSURANCE is to each one engaged in it just about what he thinks it is. It is important then that every such person should be impressed with the respectability and dignity of his vocation and courteously defend the business when slandered or unjustly assailed, stand between it and the things that make for its discredit or injury, and by his own administration, to the smallest detail of direct or indirect doing and influence, minister to its reputation, integrity and honor.

* * *

THE FACT THAT THE GLENS FALLS has escaped some of the late serious fires would incline us to believe that our "lines are fallen in pleasant places," did not our loss record save us from being too certain of it. — *June, '94.*

* * *

TWO DEAR OLD LADIES were enthusiastically comparing their store of china heirlooms. Said one of them, "I know of no calamity that would equal the burning of our houses and losing our rare pieces of china." "Surely," said the other, "it is not so bad as losing one's children." "Indeed, it is," was the response, "for when one's children die we have the consolations of religion." "But, in the other case, my dear, you can have the more tangible and available sustaining grace of insurance."

I DON'T THINK," said the proprietor of a new bone boiling establishment, "that fire insurance meets the greatest need, not by a long shot. Here's my property threatened to be burned as a nuisance, and actually has been set on fire twice. Any fool knows that I need insurance, and need it bad, but I can't get it from these blasted monopolies. There ought to be a law obliging insurance companies to meet such extreme necessities."

Now if this man should be elected to the Legislature, his first record will very likely read, "Mr. Boneboiler: a bill to compel fire insurance companies to insure nuisances."

* * *

PETER O'LEUM, of the oil regions, has twin daughters named Gasoline and Kerosene. They are a par-of-fine girls, and compared to their crude old father they are refined and, on occasion, brilliant. A young man named Naphtha, a volatile cousin, went sparking one of the girls last week and hasn't benzine since.

* * *

ONE OF MY SCHOOLMATES," said the self-made old man, "was a rich man's son. I was a poor boy. He had dollars to spend where I had pennies, but he is now President of an insurance company." "And what are you, pray?" "I am the Receiver of his company."

* * *

IF YOU WOULD find a great many faults, be on the look-out. If you would find more of them, be on the look-in.

* * *

THE MAN who will do nothing without pay will usually do anything for pay.

* * *

MR. BROKAH — "I can put \$50,000 of it in some excellent Lloyds. You know —"

Mr. Levelhead — "Lloyds? Not any. I prefer my insurance unalloyed."

— *Insurance.*

* * *

THERE IS SOMETHING wrong with the father who will tie up his dog at night and let his boy run the streets. — *Ram's Horn.*

* * *

AN AGENT MENTIONING the large number of retiring companies sensibly says: "It is strange that some of them do not know what the matter is. A change of managers would often prove good for what ails them, and is certainly worth trying." — *June, '94.*

* * *

EVERY LITTLE WHILE legitimate insurance is attacked by some new scheme or device, usually having the purpose of present profit to the promoters, rather than good indemnity for the property owner.

Just now we have the Lloyds craze. Almost every day the number is increasing, and the more rapidly they are organized, the sooner will the end come. It is a very simple scheme, this of Lloyds — just an

agreement by a number of individuals that each one will for himself write such and such an amount or portion of each risk accepted. An attorney is appointed with authority to accept risks and bind the individual members in policy form. A few of these members may be financially good, and others good for nothing, yet each is liable only for his share. All may be rich men to-day, but none may be at all rich next month.

"They are," says *Insurance*, "all speculators, every one of them; if they were not, they would not be venturing rashly into insurance, a business of which they are practically ignorant. It is just the class of men who make up these lists of individual underwriters that are failing all over the country."

It is decidedly weaker and less reliable than the mutual plan, and has no promise of meeting what business men want for insurance. The Lloyds will have their day, however, and in the end will emphasize the solid and enduring character of stock companies with their capital, reserves, and law-regulated and compelled conduct of their business.

— *June, '94.*

* * *

THE BEST of your ability to-day ought not to be a fixed measure for to-morrow. and elevation plans and yet not up to all the specifications.

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* * *

PURSuing lines of least resistance is liable to lead to undesirable risks. IT IS BETTER to forget something we ought to remember than to remember so many things we ought to forget.

* * *

* * *

AN INSURANCE man may be built according to good ground ALL MISTAKES are not reprehensible, but all repetitions of the same mistakes are.

* * *

THE RESIDENCE, boarding house, or hotel wherein Miss Clara Bell, the giddy correspondent of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, is a specially hazardous risk and on our prohibited list. This dramatically inclined maiden writes in the *Enquirer*:

I never realized how the angels must feel in their envelopes of soft, ethereal cloud until I got into an India silk nightgown. They are too fragile and delicate to be rudely washed in a tub, but are cleaned by the same professional hands that rejuvenate kid gloves and lace curtains. If ever I could hail with ecstasy a midnight fire, that would drive me suddenly out of my bed, hurry me down a dizzy ladder, and compel me to faint in the grip of the firemen, just now is the juncture.

The whole Cincinnati fire department and a thousand volunteers, more or less, are just furiously impatient to catch her when she faints. That "midnight fire" is too much desired to fail. — *June, '94.*

* * *

ONE REASON which was given why we ought to write a certain risk, was the emphasized fact that "the building is equipped with a first-class fire escape."

IN THE CASE of a very much mortgaged block of buildings which had burned from the friction of overincumbrance, an adjuster declared that there ought to be no insurance liability, because "evidences of debt" were specifically excepted in the standard form of policy, and that that was about what these buildings were.

* * *



AH!" said Agent Simpkins, "these signs are all right. When put up on the outside of our office they will give a lesson to the public by this contrast between kinds of fire insurance and also tell what kind we deal in."

See next illustration showing how these signs read when put up, to a "feller" across the street.

THIS IS the way Simpkins' signs read from across the street. See preceding illustration for how they read to Simpkins before they were put up.

* * *

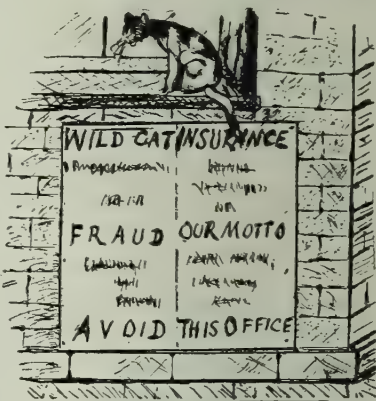
IN VIEW OF the public gloating of the Lloyds over the Columbian, Burlington and other stock company failures, the following story is related as timely and pertinent:

"An old widower, being a modernized edition of Bluebeard, used to keep his departed wives' bonnets hanging in a row in the hall closet. There was always one vacant hook. This collection he always showed with a great deal of pride to each succeeding bride. The fifth one looked at the four bonnets all hanging in a row, and then pointing to the extra hook, said in the tone of prophecy: 'The next one will be a hat!' It was." — *Journal of Commerce*.

* * *

A GLENS FALLS MAN speaking at a meeting of insurance men of the difficulties in adjusting the losses of women claimants, related the following:

A young special agent once said to me that he lost something of his natural admiration for the fair sex every time he encountered a woman loss claimant. What seemed so fair otherwise proved so fearfully unfair "thuswise." The fact is, every time he undertook such an adjustment he lost a good deal of his conceit, for he was sure to be overreached — and this is true of all of us. Women claimants, somehow, have such invaluable, time-honored and irreplaceable property burned; such a



fatuity for saving only the very poorest, nearest worthless and least useful samples of all their possessions; have such an irresistible way of enlisting the sympathy and demoralizing the judgment; that I never was equal to doing justice to my company in such cases.

I recall a whole afternoon of discussion and argument over the merits and value at the time of the fire of an ancient wedding dress, which was one item of a woman's loss list. There were such dear and tender recollections and associations centered in that gown of her youth; such reminders of a lamented husband No. 1, and of the dead and gone pastor who officiated at the nuptials.

There never was fabric so rich or rare;
So fast in color, or so good to wear,
Or ever saved with such exquisite care.

It had that peculiar wine-like quality of improving with age, and was worth so much more when it perished in the flames than when it first adorned that youthful bride. There was nothing like it left in all the world of gowns, or to be found in any collection of fashions. Her husband No. 1 so admired that dress, and so admired her in it, that he lived but a few years to enjoy the entrancing combination. Her husband No. 2, unfortunately, had never seen her in this particular costume, and for the reason that it was too small for her matronly figure she had not worn it for the past twenty years. It had ceased to be wearing apparel and become an antique work of art. There were sobs and tears, and almost faintings, as I tried to persuade the reasonableness of cutting her claim for this item in half. It all ended in a compromise on my part, and in hysterics on hers, and as I left that lacerated heart, inarticulate in its grief, I felt all the pangs of a penitent pirate.

On my way to the depot that evening, I met the husband — No. 2, of course — and fearing that he might be abroad on an errand of vengeance I hastened to express my regret that I could not think it right to allow his wife's full claim for that gown. "Young man," said he, "don't worry about that, she says you 'lowed her more'n double what she expected to git."

* * *

A CORRESPONDENT suggests that losses be paid the same length of time after completion of proof as elapsed between the commencement of the policy and the payment of the premium. Such an endorsement, he thinks, would help the credit-for-premium habit.

* * *

ONE OF OUR AGENTS in writing of what he calls the "humiliation" of submitting his daily reports to a stamp clerk, says: "The stamp clerk is the conductor's bell-punch applied to agents and signifies that agents are suspected of being dishonest rascals." Our friend is oversensitive and utterly mistakes the purpose and mission of the stamp clerk, for he was created and ordained to watch the companies — not the agents. As the companies have all the needed data to keep their agents up to tariffs, it is plain that the talent which wields the rubber stamp is not needed to check agents, but to keep companies from ruining themselves by accepting rates below those agreed upon as the minimum of safety. The alleged humiliation does not apply to the agents. — *Sept. '94.*

* * *

MADAM," said the patient, but weary adjuster, "you claim double the quantity of material in this burned dress than I ever before heard of as needful to make a dress." "This dress, sir, was modern, with latest style sleeves." "Beg your pardon, madam, for forgetting so conspicuous a feature of a present-day dress as sleeves. What is your next item?" — *Sept. '94.*

FIRE INSURANCE is a modest and self-sacrificing business. It meekly, or with feeble protest, assumes all the hazards of new uses and appliances, inventions, experiments, etc.: Steam heating novelties; new uses of kerosene, with new contrivances for using; new electric light and power contrivances, with cheaper and less safe methods of installation; gasoline with its myriad kind of stoves and heaters; benzine and its increasing use; new chemical products, fearfully inflammable and explosive, entering into stocks, storage and other kindred matters resolutely forcing their unknown quantity of hazard into the general indemnity of fire insurance.

If a transportation, warehousing, storage or other business discovers a liability or danger or contingency which may cause fire-loss to them or their patrons, it is forthwith transferred to the insurance companies by neatly constructed and innocent appearing phrases in their printed forms.

Some mild office voice of protest may be raised, but the big agent, or bully broker, shouts back his "others do it," and in the silence which follows, a new noncompensated hazard enters into the future of underwriting. Encouraged by this condition of timidity on the part of managers, just now comes an increasing demand from owners of buildings occupying leased railroad lands, such as elevators, lumber yards, etc., for clauses relieving the railroad companies, and sometimes other corporations, from all liability from fires caused by the companies. The carelessness of railroad employees has so often compelled attention to subrogated claims and their payment by legal compulsion, that this happy idea of putting the whole burden upon insurance, means large relief to these corporations. It is for insurance companies to say whether they will take this load, which is sure to enlarge by the increased carelessness of railroad management natural to this transferred liability, for it covers a large class of ignitions. — *June, '94.*

* * *

THE ADJUSTER is the subject of one of Bill Nye's recent "humor-
osities," which we sample as follows:

AN insurance adjuster is one who stands between the assured and immediate wealth. If it were not for the adjuster, the insurance company would soon give away all its money and fetch up in the poorhouse.

THE local agent and the adjuster are two different men. One is a social favorite, and a pleasing conversationalist, while the other is a man who tells you how cheaply houses like yours can be built now-a-days. The agent gives you all sorts of advantages over the company, but when the adjuster comes you find that those things, after all, were not put into the policy. They are both lovely characters, but in different ways. One fixes it so that you will, in case of fire, be about \$1,000 better off, while the other makes you feel so glad to think that the company has not slapped you into jail for fraud, that you tremble all over till he goes away.

LIFE insurance is not quite so bad, although I expect to be dug up by seven or eight different companies in order that they may be plumb sure that I am not playing possum on them.

WHEN the adjuster went away, I felt from what they said to me that I was a sort of janitor for their companies, and that if I did not use more care in protecting the property, I would be discharged and another man put in my place.

— *Sept. '94.*

IN LOOKING OVER some of our older and most successful agencies and seeking the reason for these favorable features, we find that success has come from methodical work, rather than from any so-called special aptitude. These agents have acted on the lines which would bring good results in any business they might undertake. Their genius has been that of everyday common sense and everyday industry applied to the building up of their business so that it would stay built, whether the growth was slow or otherwise. They esteem insurance a dignified business, and by their way of transacting it have taught the public to so esteem it also.

The intelligent, prompt, methodical plodder will outstrip, in a long race, the erratic "hustler" and spontaneous "boomer" in any business which needs establishment.

The agent who is looking to the future good of his agency, and not wholly to the present, and who discriminatingly works out that policy, will achieve the most solid success. Mere smartness seldom has any promising future. — *Sept. '94.*

* * *

THE BEST thing to do when you make a mistake is to make it teach you something. — *Ram's Horn.*

* * *

WE MAKE following extracts from late correspondence, which may prove suggestive to some reader:

FINDING THAT, because of reduced stocks, increased rates, and a general tendency to economize, my premiums would fall off on renewals, I have been making extra efforts for new business and, as you know, have been quite successful. I have been encouraged to do more soliciting, and the prospect is that I shall do a larger business this year than ever.

AS LAST month was a little slack, I put in an extra "jump" for Tornado business, and it paid. Tornado insurance has not been much presented in this locality, and I went to our most prosperous and prudent property owners, men who do not like to take chances of loss when loss can be prevented, and I was rather surprised at the favorable results. Nothing like trying.

THE GLENS FALLS is a favorite in this locality, and, after having an agency here for forty years, it ought to be. Enclosed is another good dwelling which came in of itself, so to speak, for I had not solicited it. I give the GLENS FALLS "shingle" a conspicuous place on my office.

THE NEW risks lately sent you have come by presenting the merits of the "Old and Tried." I find that property owners are getting a little more particular in wanting to know about the companies, and the GLENS FALLS' standing, age, and history take.

IAM doing more personal canvassing than ever. My daughter is now out of school and does most of the office work, which gives me more time for outside. So far, the new arrangement has resulted in an increased business. I find that I have kept too much in my office.

MY LATE increase of business is due to the loss of confidence in the agency of — — —, which has been doing the largest business here. They have had several losses and while they have been supposably of honest origin, still there was more or less over-insurance, resulting in delayed and annoying adjustments. The few losses at my agency have been promptly adjusted, there being no question

about the insurance being less than value. One of the most troublesome adjustments was a risk on which I refused to write the amount wanted. Virtue is sometimes rewarded, you see.

FOR A PERIOD I have been mailing and handing out GLENS FALLS statements, leaflets, etc., to our best insurers, and it has helped in securing several good risks of late. These parties felt acquainted with the Company when the old policies expired, and at about that time I was on hand for business purposes. I have a good list of this same sort, some of which is bound to come our way.

THAT NEW agency firm which took some of my business and some from other local agencies is about played out. Their companies are seeking other agents or quitting, and much of their business is going back to other agents. The ambitious companies who started these young men, did us and the local business much harm, but they got the worst of it.

THE GLENS FALLS has been the longest in this agency of any of our companies, and it is easier for us to increase your business, and that's why we are doing it.

WE ARE very glad you ordered us to take up No. ——. Several of our companies were so unfortunate as to be on the risk when the fire came, but they had the same information you had.

I HAVE GOT through experimenting with doubtful risks at your office. You must have a kind of clockwork system, for whenever I have sent you a risk with doubts whether you would accept it, it was sure to be declined. Hereafter, you will get only what I know you will take, and I flatter myself I know.

YOUR BACKBONE saved you a loss on that ——— block. I didn't think your objection a good one, and a special agent who approved a line thought so, too. But that objected-to feature caused the fire, sure. I congratulate your spinal column.

THE TRUSTEES in charge of the property named in the enclosed daily reports requested a list and statements of my companies, and have asked for all the insurance which the GLENS FALLS will carry, and every risk is of your sort.

Sept. '94.

* * *

EXCUSING the smallness of a monthly report, the agent wrote the company: "There is little inspiration in the business and but few expirations."

* * *

AS WE HAVE seen the complaining circular-letters of insurance companies, setting forth the unpleasantnesses which competition has brought upon the business, and the unsatisfactory results of the last few years, the wonder comes why these same offices are not foremost in the work of reform.

It requires but little reflection to reach the conclusion that the business is itself largely to blame for what afflicts it. There are so many things which have come to us on our own invitation, and remain with our permission, that simply complaining is like advertising ourselves as the authors and publishers of our own sorrows. "Stand up," said the Judge to an imbecile boy who, in a fool's passion, had split the heads of his sleeping father and mother, "you are found guilty, and have you anything to say before your sentence?" "I hope," said the culprit, "that you'll be merciful and consider that I'm a poor

orphan boy." If we have made ourselves orphans, so to speak, let us save ourselves the further humiliation of pleading our self-inflicted condition.

It will be better, and more dignified, to pull ourselves out of the general unsatisfactory condition by an independent administration of our own affairs as far as possible.

We can insist that there are inadequate rates which we will not accept; kinds, conditions and situations of property and property owners which we must refuse; expenses we cannot incur; overinsurance which we will not participate in; claims we must resist; forms and practices we won't approve; territory with prohibitory records; and agents who cannot misrepresent us.

While we all inherit much of incumbrance and difficulty from the general condition and current practices in the business, we can, after all, individually entrench ourselves behind sound teachings of experience with a "thus far we will go and no farther." This will do more for reform than complaining. — *Sept. '94.*

* * *

SO LONG AGO AS 1878, a speaker before the Northwestern Association was applauded when he said that the war of competition had called out too large an insurance army and that there ought to be a mustering out; that the business owed it to itself to cut off the legion of middlemen and supernumeraries who get compensation out of agents' commissions or companies' premiums. But since that time the number has considerably increased, increased in disproportion to the increase of the business, and the tendency is still in that direction.

Sept. '94.

* * *

ONE OF THE ADJUSTERS of a certain loss congratulated the GLENS FALLS on its "good luck" in declining the risk before the fire. There was no "luck" about it — just business. To be sure we did not expect it would burn, but it was a large area merchandise risk on which the rate had been twice reduced by distributing the insurance among all the members of the local board, and by threats of getting the insurance in New York, until the rate was much below that of small stores of better construction in the same town. The rate was ridiculous, even if there were large lines of good insurance, when the fire came.

* * *

BE PROGRESSIVE lest you become retrogressive.

* * *

KNOWLEDGE is proud that it has learned so much.
Wisdom is humble that it knows no more.

* * *

SOME agents represent a variety of companies just as they have a variety of cigars; one kind for those who know the difference and another for those who don't.

A STORY IS TOLD in the *American Exchange and Review* of an elephant which was brought upon a dock to draw a disabled boat to the shore. The beast stopped before proceeding far, conscious of the inability of the framework to sustain the extra strain, and neither coaxing nor blows could move him forward. "An insurance inspector," says the *A. E. and R.*, "would say the elephant knew the risk. To the contrary of this, the animal knew nothing of the risk, he only knew the certainty."

There are kinds of property so situated, conditioned and circumstanced as not to be fire risks, but fire certainties, whether so classed by reason, intuition or elephantine instinct.

* * *

A FARMER living some ten miles from Wauseon, O., procured a policy on his barn. The locomotive of the train which took him home set fire to the barn which he had just insured.

* * *

SAID THE suspicioned claimant to the suspicious adjuster, "I cannot look at these ruins without tears. For a man who loved his home as I did, what a scene — what a sorrowful scene."

"Yes," thought the adjuster, "a case of kerosene."

* * *

INCOMPATIBILITY of finance has if castles in the air were insurable. been the cause of divorces between agents and their companies.

* * *

WE CANNOT hold our competitors in contempt without compromising ourselves.

* * *

PREMIUM receipts would increase

* * *

AN AGENT replying to the daily report inquiry concerning the reputation of assured, facetiously answered: "He has behaved right well since his three years' term in our state penitentiary — as chaplain."

* * *

AN AGENT answering the question concerning the water supply of his town said: "What little water this town has is religiously reserved for fire purposes. It is never used as a beverage."

* * *

THE VALUE of an unabridged dictionary was proved recently when the office was advised by an agent that a certain form was "consuetudinary" in his locality.

* * *

A FRIEND sends the following, which he says is "from the diary of an insurance maniac":

The new daily report clerk came to the secretary with bulging eyes. "Mr. Singlewhistle," said he, "here is a remarkable endorsement. It reads, 'Permission for insured building to be occupied by ten a-n-t-s.' Do you think, sir, that the last word should be spelled a-u-n-t-s?" "I think not," said the experienced and intelligent secretary, "for if you will consider the last two words as one, the indorsement will cease to be remarkable, unusual or unique."

HERE IS a sensible argument made before the Governor of Iowa to influence him to veto a hostile insurance law: "Underwriters are the best customers of the State of Iowa; that is, they add to the State itself, and to the people of the State, more money, with less expense and litigation, than any other business done within the limits of the State. Since 1880 underwriters have paid to the state treasury of Iowa over \$1,000,000 for taxation. During the same period they have paid the citizens of the State nearly \$17,000,000 on property destroyed, and practically restored this amount to the tax duplicate of the State." — *Insurance Herald*.

* * *

A WESTERN life insurance hustler went still farther west for his health and liberty, and began soliciting lives on the far frontier, in his own peculiarly startling and irresistible manner. His career, however, was brief. The Coroner's jury found that he abruptly approached one Jake Blazer, a quick-trigger cowboy from Paradise Ranch, and bluntly inquired, "Have you ever studied the death rate of mortality tables, and are you prepared to die —" These proved the last words of this wordy man, for as he uttered them he reached for a handful of life insurance documents from his well-supplied hip pocket — and Jake was acquitted.

* * *

WHAT WE call shrewdness in ourselves may look like trickery to others.

* * *

EXTRA HAZARDOUS

BY BOSH JILLINGS & Co.

MY heart's ablaze with Cupid's flame,
Love's fires are burning brisk;
Combustive passion in me reigns,
Ignition lurks all through my veins,
I am an awful risk.

The fervid charms of Polly Crate
Expose my mortal frame,
And greatly raise my basis rate,
While schedule charges indicate
I'm near a total claim.

Her parents' cruel compact was,
'Twixt me and my adored,
A wide and chilly clear-space clause,
A fire wall — and all because
I could not pay her business ma's
Tariff for local board.

She canceled all the lines I wrote,
Declined my company
In a specific, short-rate note,
In terms and form too rude to quote.
Alas, my Polly C.
Won't be renewed with me.

Those flashing, nonconcurrent eyes
(They are inclined to cross);
That blanket form, dear double line,
My salvage sweet — all once were mine —
All now my proof of loss!

DURING THE EPIDEMIC of fire in the West last autumn, the GLENS FALLS fortunately escaped loss in the large conflagrations. The Chicago papers had daily lists of companies involved, and the fact that the "Old and Tried" did not appear therein lost the Company the renewal of a desirable Chicago risk. The owner of the property thought the Company couldn't be doing very much business, for he had not seen it quoted on any of the frequent losses of that period.

This case stands alone of its kind in our experience, and is given as an addition to the varied whims with which agents have to deal.

To advertise by being listed on losses is expensive. — *March, '95.*

* * *

THE *DAILY NEWS*, of Chicago, gives the following readable sketch, under the caption of "A Chicago Vignette." We have taken the liberty of adding a word or two in conclusion, as evidence of the heroine's really good business sense.

Polly Jones had her goods and chattels insured the other day, and now the only thing which troubles her is that she doesn't know what on earth to do with the policy, unless she uses it to carpet her room.

"H'm!" said the person to whom she first broached insurance, "what is the use of your getting insured? You've lived twenty years without getting burned out, and there isn't any more prospect of fire in the future than there has been in the past. There are two things every girl is weak-minded about, fire and burglars. Why, do you know, statistics show that the per cent of fires is only one in —"

Consequently Polly let the subject drop and continued going to sleep decked out in all her jewelry, with her pocketbook under her pillow, and harassed by a drowsy mental debate as to whether it would be better to cram clothes into a trunk or dump them into a sheet provided a fire did break out after all. In fact, Polly was becoming a trifle unbalanced by her haunting fear of a conflagration.

And the other day the fire did come — but it was a full block away.

Polly was at lunch and as the engines clattered and rung by she looked pale. "There is a frightful wind," she said tremulously, "blowing straight towards us, too!"

"There's a whole block of houses to burn before these flats are reached," crushingly said the lone man who graced the table as he grabbed a hat and overcoat and joined the crowd surging to the blaze.

And the wind blew and the roaring fire created an atmospheric whirlpool, which raged like a cyclone, and as more engines came and firemen looked grim the neighborhood drug stores were jammed with hysterical women who lived in a radius of a block from the big conflagration, wildly telephoning to their husbands and brothers to come straight home or they wouldn't be able to recognize their loving families, because they would be all charred up in ten minutes.

Polly held the fort on the back porch as the heavy smoke rolled over and obscured the tumultuous and unusual excitement; she dashed into her flat and out again at the rate of ten times a minute, under the absurd impression that this energy assisted matters in a way. And horrors! Through the smarting smoke red-hot coals began to shoot like tiny rockets and in desperate fear Polly grabbed the dishpan and turned on the hydrant. She soaked that porch and herself in the bargain and incidentally a harmless man who stood in the alley beneath. She shrieked above the din and roar to the other women to do the same and danced vigorously on the live coals falling at her feet.

Then a wild yell rose from the street in front and she dashed crazily to the front windows. A house a block and a half from the fire had caught on the roof, awnings were blazing up and down the street, and being pulled down, and Polly knew then that it would be another Chicago fire.

She flung open her trunk and the closet door and grasped armfuls of skirts and shoes and hats; waists, the sleeves of which had always been tenderly cherished, were ruthlessly stuffed into corners of the hat tray; stray sheets of music, books,

draperies and teacups scattered themselves over the room. Polly worked with feverish despair, waiting for the firemen to rush in and drag her out.

As she flung a cologne bottle against a mirror and wildly emptied the waste-paper basket into her trunk, the lone man strolled back and paused in dismay at her door. He looked as if he had been dipped in water and dried in cinders, but that did not interfere with his expression, which was disgusted.

"Great Scott!" he murmured, as he stepped on a pin-cushion. "There is more confusion here than at the fire. The danger's over now. How silly of you! I didn't get excited!"

"Well," gasped Polly, fiercely, "you didn't have to! You're insured!"

Then she looked in the broken mirror at her grimy, streaked face, and as her tense muscles relaxed, felt as if she would enthusiastically enjoy being buried and undisturbed for a full week. As she surveyed her room and took in the fact that a saw-mill could not have worked any more dense destruction, she sat down and wept miserably.

She doesn't remember how she found strength to straighten out things — she was too exhausted to have any memory or brains.

But a small inkling of sense was left her, for the first thing she did next day as she crawled wearily and stiffly down town was to hunt up the "Old and Tried" GLENS FALLS office and buy a year's peace of mind.

* * *

A FACETIOUS AGENT in a town which has suffered frequent fires, recommends the acceptance of an offered risk, because "there has been no fire in its vicinity during the last thirty days."

* * *

WE HAVE LATELY HEARD of two or three cases of agents getting themselves and their companies into trouble by the agents' unauthorized acts after a fire. It will be safe to remember that when a fire occurs agents can act only as specifically instructed by their companies. At once notify the companies interested, and refer claimants to their policies for instructions until you have heard from your companies. Above all make no changes whatever in the policies by endorsement, consent to assignment, delivery or otherwise. As the situation is when the fire came, so let it precisely remain until otherwise instructed. — *Sept.*, '95.

* * *

THE VACATION SEASON is pleasant to look forward to, and in most cases to look back upon, but for present consideration it offers many excuses for not doing things which ought to be done. However, it is mostly over with for the current year, and attention will probably be promptly given to the laid by and put over odds and ends which vacation may have deferred. It may be expected, too, that the refreshed and recreated agents will be better equipped for pushing insurance matters during the remainder of the year. — *Sept.* '95.

* * *

DINKLEBAUM — Vat's der matter, Isaacs? You look vorriet.
Isaacs — Vorriet? S'hellup me gracious! I vos nearly grazy. I haf now no chance to make a brofitable investment mit mein store no more. I schoost yesterday gets me mein stock insured for double, und de landlort goes undt rents der floor above for a schwimmin school undt der basement to a fire oxdinguisher concern. — *Puck.*

THE "MELLIFLUOUS-NESS" OF THE SOCIAL BOARD

A GLENS FALLS INSURANCE MAN'S AFTER-DINNER DREAM

AT A CERTAIN fire underwriters' banquet one of the post-prandial talks was a sort of humorous effort on the line of proving the harmonizing and cohesive influence of the social board. The speaker argued that as compared with the national board, state board, local boards, boards of directors, etc., none had the qualities of inward, outward and all around sweet accord and unanimity inherent in the social board. Other boards, he held, might have more fullness of purpose, but this has more purpose of fullness. The others are not always remarkable for oneness of motive, but at the social board there is usually the animation of one sort of spirit, whether it bears precisely the same label or not. The bill of fare is so bountifully concurrent, acceptably specific and the average so fair; there is such an abounding liberty of inspection, selection and rejection, to go light or load up, that even the most pronounced apostle of "small lines well scattered" may take a "jumbo flyer" of the most hazardous sort, even though he may wish in the morning that he had reinsured ninety per cent of the risk and make a mental memorandum not to renew at expiration. Of all gatherings of fire underwriters, the banquet is emphatically the occasion of unreserved confidence and good faith, where loyalty, fraternity and coöperation do most twine and twist, and mingle and mix, and sizz and pop to the tune of brotherly love.

It is not our purpose to report this talk in all its mingling of sense and nonsense, but to give our readers one of many humorous illustrations of the speaker's points. The following is the story:

It is told that two habitually belligerent competing western agents, who always opposed each other in their local board and out of it, and who scarcely spoke as they passed, were not long ago actually seen wending their winding homeward way from a banquet of their board, arm in arm! They were banquet converts to brotherly love and loyalty, and profusely illustrated their conversion in mutual confessions and forgiveness. They had accepted, at last, the truth that "in union there is strength" — or, as they several times rendered it, "united we'll get home, divided we can't."

Their route was the most roundabout and zig-zag way to their respective domestic headquarters, the longer to enjoy the charm of their new concurrency, and they stopped every now and then to embrace each other in their young and delightful mutuality.

They lived almost neighbors to each other and at last reached the home of one of them. By this time their individualities had become so entirely absorbed in their compact, union or local board relations, that separation was too painful to be even seriously thought of.

They sat themselves down on the outside steps — their arms about each other's swallow-tails and the cocktails they had swallowed — and there, in the witching moonlight of a very early summer morning, they leaned against each other — two rivals with a double line, but their voices hic'd as one.

Their thoughts were above the sublunary low rated dwellings of the locality and soared to the celestial hazards above, finally centering on the full orb'd moon. One, with a natural musical turn, tried to serenade the moon. He nobly wrestled with "Roll on Silver Moon," but his feelings overcame him at each trial of the word "silver," for he was evidently "agin free coinage." "Say," said the other, in sympathy with the failure of the serenade, "say, tain't worth (hic) it. The moon ain't worth (hic) it. I wouldn't write the risk in any company (hic) I got. Yer can't get no average on such a changeable (hic) old thing. Say, the darned (hic) old moon ain't full more'n once a month (hic). Jus' think of that — can't no way get full more'n jus' onc't (hic) a month. We can get fuller'n a tick (hic) every night!" and they hugged each other most ardently in their glorious advantage over the moon.

About this time the singing one seemed to revive and did most of the talking. The other drooped and seemed depressed with thoughts probably of his board transgressions, and only occasionally and incoherently joined his now hilarious comrade, who finally began to sing improvised topical songs. Most of these improvisations are lost forever, but there were some oft repeated lines heard and preserved by an

early bird up a tree. They were something like these, expurgated of repeated "hics" and sundry difficulties of utterance:

"We are brothers in the board
And will always keep our word,
You can bet!
We will coöperate
And never cut a rate
And not a cent rebate
And more yet!
We will never any time
Go for the other's line —
That we can't get."

The stilly night was badly disturbed and made reverberant with echoes as the hilarious one ground out the oft repeated, with variations:

"We will never any time
Go for the other's line
That we cannot get —
Cannot possibly any ways get!
We won't have any fight
Over what we cannot write —
You bet."

"Bet yer boots we won't, will we?" inquired the lively one, poking the ribs of the limp other one.

"No, zir, (hic) we won't. 'S no use ter fight for what (hic) we can't write. 'S no use ter fret over what (hic) yet can't get," was the riming but logical reply.

The singing continued, but like most things was destined to end. The whole vicinity had been aroused, including the lively one's wife, whose house this was. The big front door opened and a white-robed Galatea, with marble-like coldness, made the natural inquiry: "How long is this caterwauling going to continue?"

The lively one seemed more helplessly sensitive to the situation than the limp other one, who, by the way, had a reputation for gallantry. The lively one, struck speechless by the apparition, left it for the other one to respond.

"Good evening, (hic) mad-ma-dam. Zif yer (hic) please pardon our vocal ex-(hic) zer-ci-ces and will yer 'blige us (hic) by picking out yer own iden-ti-tickle (hic) 'usband from this local (hic) board of fire —"

Before he could finish his slow appeal she did "blige" him by snatching the lively improviser of coöperative rimes by the collar, pulling him up the steps and firing him inside the hall, shutting the door with a slam so startling as to somewhat arouse the other one, now out in the cold world alone, and bring him to a consciousness of his loneliness.

"Jus' zi 'spected (hic). Board's busted agin! Outziders (hic) too much for us. Nuzzer member pulled out."

While trying to get down the steps a tardy policeman arrived and our friend offered him extra commission and a policy fee if he would take him home.

"What is your name, sir?" asked the bluecoat.

"My name's (hic) Jo."

"Yes, but what is your full name?"

This question seemed to especially hurt our forlorn acquaintance.

"Want to know my full name, eh? Well, (hic) want yer to understand that my name's Jo, full or sober, (hic) — juss er same!" And he at once withdrew further negotiations with the blue-coated guardian of that precinct.

He finally reached home, climbed the steps, fumbled a little in the use of his latch key, entered, removed his shoes, quietly went upstairs in stocking feet, softly entered his sleeping room, deftly removed his full dress, and put himself in his "little bed," without waking the partner of his heart and home — as he supposed. But, in fact, she had heard his arrival and saw him enter the room, and saw him now very distinctly by the light of the moon!

"Jo," said his wife, "you are drunk again."

"No, (hic) my dear. I'm excited, and I'm happy, but I'm not —"

"Well, if you are not drunk, and very drunk, too, why are you in bed with your hat on?"

Sure enough, with all his care, he had not removed his tile. There it was, the sure evidence of his condition. Taking off his hat and throwing it viciously among a lot of bric-a-brac, he gathered courage to say:

"Don't zay (hic) nozzor word. Took the risk by mistake. Zorry, verry zorry, but 't won't be renewed, my dear, won't be renewed — anyhow, not in same company!

"Yes, when I cut a rate
Or board rule violate,
And get caught in my mistake,
I always own up the cake —

write 'er up (hic) jesser same in nozzor company, and swear I'll never do so any more, any more. No, my dear, I'll never do so any more, any more, any more."

And he sung the last words over and over till "nature's sweet restorer" took him kindly in her arms and lulled him to as pleasant dreams as his night's extra hazardous exposure would permit.

So much, my friends, (said the after-dinner speaker, whose remarks we are reporting), for this one case and one night of an ideal local compact, all induced by the harmonizing and cementing influences of a single banquet. But even banquets will not bring eternal sunshine to insurance men. There is a forgetfulness in this business which is demoralizing. An agent once said that a property owner placed an expiring line which he had carried for years with another office while the first agent's oysters were still undigested in the insurant's stomach. And so in the case of the two agents whose experience we have, perhaps, too far considered, there came to pass the very next day a most acrimonious quarrel between them over the methods whereby one lost and the other secured a considerable line of desirable insurance.

But after all, think of those few hours of loyal, blissful, local board harmony, and let us to-night profit by the experience, for though oneness endureth for the night, competition cometh in the morning! — *Holiday Chronicle*.

* * *

GASOLINE, that domestic pet in some localities, has demonstrated quite a variety of its deadly possibilities this summer. Besides loss of property, seven deaths and six serious injuries have come to our notice within two months.

The last accident occurred at Washington, D. C., where the person handling it appreciated the danger, and took great precaution, but he stepped upon an unseen match, and the gas, being heavier than air, had settled to the floor. An explosion followed which tore out the front of the building and fatally injured the party. — *Sept. '95*.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING from the *New York Journal of Commerce* may interest some agent who is not already informed in the matter:

Question — One or more fire insurance companies insure a building (New York standard, general form), including plate glass front. A tenant places near the glass kerosene oil lamps to melt frost and ice off the windows; the heat from the lamps cracks the glass. Is the fire insurance company liable?

Reply — It is well settled by numerous decisions that the insurer is not liable for a loss of this kind. For damage from a fire which has broken beyond its intended bounds, he is liable. He may be liable, also, in some cases, for damage from heat when there is no conflagration. But he is never responsible for the excessive use of fire purposely used, whereby the article to which the fire is purposely applied is damaged. To hold the insurer bound for such losses would, as one writer has remarked, make him liable for every case of overbaked bread or overroasted coffee.

AN INSURANCE VETERAN'S EXPERIENCES

THE following conversational discussion of several phases of moral hazard and other insurance matters, with illustrative incidents, was contributed by the GLENS FALLS office to the *Holiday Chronicle* of 1890. We believe it will interest our agents and emphasize some important features of agency experience, which time does not very much change:

Once upon a time a fire in one of the smaller cities of New York State brought together quite a number of adjusters and special agents. Naturally enough, in a kind of "birds-of-a-feather" sort of way, they found themselves together of an evening, discussing this, that, and the other thing touching fire insurance experience. Some smoked and listened; others smoked and talked; and a few both listened and talked, without smoking.

Some were young and inexperienced, and, fortunately, knew it. Some were "fresh," and the others knew it. Some had grown gray in the service, and one might even be called "The Veteran," for although not an old man, he had had more years of field experience than any of his companions. Usually reticent, he was much more than ordinarily communicative on this occasion, to the enjoyment and edification of those present. Gossip and news, the probable fate of certain companies not there represented, the ever existing wrong things and the evils in the business, led to more useful discussions. The matter of moral hazard was finally approached, and more and more was "The Veteran" involved in the talk. Most of the "boys" had their own ideas of moral hazard; a few simply approved the ideas of others.

This gathering was some years ago, and the phonograph of my memory is somewhat inarticulate as to what was said, and who said it, but either because "The Veteran" spoke more distinctly, or because he was nearer the recording machine, I get, at this late day, more of what he said than of what was said by others. There were many deviations, occasioned by questions, assertions and scraps of experience; but I will give my recollection of "The Veteran's" remarks and the adjustment experience with which he illustrated his opinions.

WHAT "THE VETERAN" SAID

"No, boys, we can't get around the fact that insurance itself creates some part of that which we call moral hazard. An old-time insurance president once got off this choice bit of self-evident truth: 'Insurance is responsible for all the moral hazard it creates.' If he meant, as perhaps he did, that if there was no such thing as insurance, there would be no moral hazard, he was mistaken, for there is moral hazard in all kinds of business. The term, in our business, simply covers the moral delinquencies, the dishonesty and wickedness of human nature, which find motive and opportunity under an insurance policy. It shows itself in insurance just as it would in trade, in the stock market or in swapping horses. It is nonsense to charge *all* the wickedness we find in the investigation of fires and claims as having been born of insurance, and yet that is the way some of you talk.

"Without any such thing as fire insurance there would be incendiarism for revenge; indeed, there would likely be an increase in this kind of fires, for they would better satisfy revenge in the greater injury they would inflict. An enemy is not likely to burn a building if he knows that the insurance will save the owner from serious hurt by the burning. So, in this direction, insurance works a sort of salvage of hazard.

"Without insurance there would also be fires originating in wantonness and from innate cussedness.

"Certainly there have been fires which would never have occurred if there were no such thing as insurance; but the moral delinquency expressed in such incendiary acts may not have been created by insurance. However, while there is a moral hazard which begins with the policy itself — which the policy does not really create, but does by its issue bring into the business — there is also a moral hazard which the policy develops, but does not really create. In this direction over-insurance is a large factor.

"No, sir; I don't believe that overinsurance creates anything like the degree of moral hazard which many suppose. When we remember how much overinsurance there is, it is a wonder that it is not the motive for more fires than it really is.

"The natural tendency to overvaluation of one's own property is one of the reasons for so much overinsurance, and for the same reason multitudes of property-owners do not know that they really are overinsured. Fortunately for companies, this is a fact, and, unfortunately for adjusters, it continues a fact after a fire.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

"I once spent a whole evening — a cold, stormy night before Christmas, twelve miles out in the country — trying to show a farmer that he did not have seventy-five tons of hay in a space that could not house over forty-five tons. He was a good Christian man, and went to his bedroom and prayed over it, and would not sign the proof until a distant neighbor, a Justice of the Peace, was sent for and approved my liberal figures. Yes, it required patience to settle this loss satisfactorily to the claimant, but it pays to be patient in such cases. I was anxious to get back to town to catch a late train and be with my family on Christmas, but here was an honest though ignorant and mistaken man. If I had rushed or forced matters I might have reached the same settlement, but would have left a soured memory of the adjustment and a bitter spirit against insurance.

"Never spare any pains to convince claimants that you desire to deal honestly and honorably with them, whatever provocation you may have from their ignorance, stubbornness, or even dishonesty.

"There is no better equipment for an adjuster than patience, straightforward openness, and firm honesty of purpose. It gives you confidence in yourself; begets confidence in the claimant; does more to quiet the fears which many honest claimants have of being overreached in a fire settlement, and to dissipate the schemes of dishonest claimants than anything else. In fact, until you secure and hold a claimant's confidence, you are at a disadvantage.

"That's so. Certainly, you need to know all about the kind of property involved in the claim. Honesty and ignorance are a poor combination to inspire the best confidence, for the moment your lack of knowledge of values or other things pertinent to the case is discovered, and it is mighty easy of discovery, you are weakened. But you can still save something if you are thought to be only anxious to meet your honest liability under your policy. You can see what you would have to overcome if you should be thought well posted, sharp, overbearing, and bound by any means to make the closest settlement possible.

"What if an adjuster should be thought both ignorant and tricky? That ought not to be a supposable case, for it is a combination which ought not to be put upon either an honest or a dishonest loss.

"But you have pulled me off the matter we were talking about. I said that overinsurance was not responsible for all the moral hazard created by insurance. It is responsible for enough, so much so as to make overinsurance an underwriting crime; although I know of one management that really encourages overinsurance as helping to a better rate, in that the company is paid for more than its actual liability.

"No, I don't believe that there are as many fires provoked by overinsurance, or insurance at all, as is believed. Fire is a subtle element, and lots of losses which go upon insurance records as of incendiary or suspicious origin, are likely to have been actually accidental. We all have known of fires which have been so promptly discovered and extinguished as to reveal an accidental origin, when, had the building been destroyed, there would have been good reasons for believing the origin criminal.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

"Only the other morning a painter came into a country drug store, keeping also oils and paints. He wanted just a little burnt umber. He was told to help himself from a small drawer. He had a pot of mixed paint with him in which was a paint brush. Carelessly he took this brush, dripping with paint, and stuck it in the umber. Enough adhered to the brush for his purpose, and he stirred it into the paint and left.

"That afternoon and evening there was a smell of something burning in the store, and the cause could not be found. The time came for closing the store, but the smell was so distinct that the druggist waited, and watched, and searched. Finally, in looking about, he happened to put his hand on the burnt umber drawer, and found it hot. Pulling it out he discovered the center to be a live coal, which, coming to the air, burst into a blaze. The mixed oil and paint from the painter's brush had dropped into the umber, and spontaneous combustion ensued.

"Now, that druggist was a new-comer to the town, a comparative stranger, known to be somewhat discouraged with his trade. He had insured on the basis of goods he expected to add, but which he had not yet even purchased. He was over-insured. He was in his store later than usual that night. If he had not discovered the fire it would have been difficult to save his reputation from the imputation of being concerned in the fire which came so near coming to pass. I could name other similar instances, and so could any of you. The popular idea, and even the statistical records, I believe, exaggerate the number of fires of criminal origin.

FAITH IN HUMAN NATURE

"I believe that most men cannot be moved, by any consideration, from their *own measure* of moral rectitude. I have great faith and confidence in men, and my experience justifies it. I am habitually very careful in speaking lightly of human nature, as it averages, and the cases where insurance is procured for premeditated fraud are comparatively few.

"The average human mind is quite loyal to its own interpretation of honesty, but there is often a queerly complex uncertainty and unexpectedness of results when it begins to measure and define rectitude, especially in a transaction covering a pressing need or promising a benefit, when the transaction itself is entirely possible to the one who is measuring the rectitude of the acts necessary to make it possible. Black seems sometimes to be almost white under the refractions and reflections of such mental-moral soliloquies. The chances for success have an influence in such meditations, and so do other things. A very little consideration will often work peculiar moral obliquities and deviations.

SUPPOSED CASE

"Suppose, for instance, a meditated scheme, the honesty of which is being measured, involves the financial or other injury of a friend or neighbor. This relation might protest; yet the same scheme might be considered a sharp business transaction if directed against a stranger. And what might even seem a good deal 'off' in the case of an individual stranger, might appear otherwise when leveled against a corporation with no soul to offend.

"You don't think there is any such sliding scale of moral reasoning? It isn't moral, nor is it reason, but this sort of thing is shaded very decidedly by circumstances, and ethical lines too often are overshadowed and obscured.

"But this sort of talk leads into a large field, and I will get back to the statement that insurance honestly bought and carefully written — insurance which may not be overinsurance, and which any of us would approve with a knowledge of all the known circumstances — may create a moral hazard under subsequent conditions.

EXCESSIVE CLAIMS

"Oh, no, I don't call the making of an unjust or dishonest claim after an accidental fire a moral hazard. It is a moral consideration which adds to the loss account, but has not caused the loss itself.

"Yes, certainly, the matter of excessive claims is an important one, and quite often includes what is fraudulent and criminal. It is a much more common thing than criminal fires, because nearly every criminal fire is followed by an excessive claim. Sometimes, as I have already said, excessive claims are honestly made — we so overestimate what is our own, etc.

"Besides, the public somehow gets the notion, we won't say how, that insurance companies take the chances of fire and the chances of a total loss, and are equally happy if no loss comes, or if it does come and it be not total. There is the false

notion, too, that an adjustment means the payment of the least possible amount on one side and 'get all you can' on the other, and that an excessive claim is a part of the 'business' of claiming. You have heard the story of the young adjuster who inquired of his more experienced associates on a loss, 'What per cent do you usually deduct from claims?'

MORAL SEDATIVE

"Then there is the reflection that so much insurance has been bought and paid for; that the agent had fixed the amount himself; that pretty good sort of other folks have claimed and been paid more than their loss, and other moral sedatives of this sort. So, on this line of fooling one's conscience comes the moral hazard which the insurance itself often creates or develops.

"Take property which becomes unprofitable, or, for any cause, less valuable than when insured. We have in such a case a sort of 'development' of overinsurance. The ownership of the property is an annoyance, and no plan for selling, or trading, or transforming materializes. The possibilities of its burning and the financial benefits by such a happening are dangerous thoughts for a certain class of men to dwell upon, even though they may be in easy circumstances — especially dangerous if they are under financial pressure. The insurance was not bought with intent to burn; there was no original overinsurance. But it is reasoned that the companies expect fires and expect to pay losses. Some agents, you know, think a fire now and then is needed to advertise the benefits of fire insurance. There is sometimes a wish that the property may burn, and that a little carelessness and neglect might result in an *accidental* fire. Perhaps some miserable character, whose acquaintance has been a little fostered, might be expected to fire the property, if he knew it would be a 'blessing in disguise.' And so, by nameless steps, a pretty good man may choke conscience and let himself down to doing what he would not permit himself to think of doing at first.

FINANCIAL TROUBLE

"But — and herein is the nearest approach to a 'hobby' that I have ever indulged — did you ever reflect how terribly and immeasurably demoralizing financial embarrassment is? I believe that the biggest in importance of all the questions in a daily report are the ones pertaining to the insured's financial condition. 'Is he free from financial embarrassment, litigation,' etc.?' If I were managing a company I would make a point of having this information from as many points of information and observation as possible, and I would refuse to cover a well-defined shadow of financial or business trouble; get off whenever the shadow appeared, and always take the benefit of a doubt.

"Assignees, receivers, sheriffs, trustees for creditors, permissions for foreclosure proceedings and loss payable claims on account of mortgages given to secure accumulated debt (not for loans for business use) I would keep clear of every time, and, so I would of anything that pertained to carrying the fire risk of a financially embarrassed party.

"Yes, I understood you, and it is true that all financially embarrassed men are not affected in the same way. I know a man who has failed and made terms with his creditors four times, and he says he is never happier than when 'compromising.' But financial distress, the strain of losing property, hard earned or otherwise, the need of present cash to save from utter ruin, the changes which poverty will bring to men and their families — all this has led to forgery, fraud, suicide and every sort of crime, and made criminals of men of previous splendid reputations. Indeed, it seems to most affect those most sensitive to what they esteem honor and position.

"You cannot safely forecast what financial stress will bring forth in any man. It is enough that it makes strong men insane. And can you guess what an insane man will not do? Financial trouble contributes a noncomputable hazard to fire insurance, so I would avoid it just as far as possible.

"About five years ago a farmer of this State, with a reputation for honor untarnished by suspicion through a long life, found that by his inability to meet a \$500 payment on a mortgage, given to meet his liability as endorser of a neighbor's note, he was in danger of losing his farm. After days spent in trying by every means

and any sacrifice to raise the money, and by sleepless nights of worry, he was driven by the stress to fire a needed barn and its contents, easily worth \$625, to secure the \$500 of insurance thereon.

"You can't tell what a man harassed and tormented by debt may do.

AN INTERESTING CASE

"This talk has brought to mind an interesting case I once had, which illustrates how pretty good men may be overcome by financial straits, and by too much meditation on a fire insurance policy in case, for instance, lightning should strike the insured property.

"That case opened my eyes to the freaks of moral hazard, and how it is sometimes developed by insurance, and how it may be so out of sight, when developed, as to be unsuspected in cases even where it actually caused a fire. I do not believe in 'yarning' about loss experiences, but this was a good while ago, and the party has been dead for some years.

"My company had an insurance of \$1,500 on a cheese factory which had burned, insurance wholly on building. I went to the locality and learned that the claimant was a reputable young farmer who had always lived in the town. He was respectably connected, both by blood and marriage. He was industrious and considered thrifty and honest. He was popular and the supervisor of his town.

"The cheese factory had been built by a company of farmers, of which our insured was one. It proved an unfortunate investment from the start. The building was a good one — too good — having cost nearly \$3,000 equipped. It was badly located, and a creamery afterwards built near by 'took' with the farmers and practically ended the cheese business. It was decided to close up the cheese company and sell the factory at auction, and our insured bought it for \$500, and borrowed the money to pay for it.

"He started it up and made a desperate effort to do something with it, but it run him further in debt. I forgot to say that our policy was on when he bought, and it was assigned to him.

"The fire was certainly of incendiary origin. The tracks of rubber boots were discovered next morning, leading to and from the ruins and a low length of fence by the roadside. These tracks were made after a light rain, which fell just before midnight, and the fire was first seen at about 1 o'clock in the morning.

"Here was the situation: A large overinsurance as to the then real value, but below cost of replacing the property, with ordinary discount for age; an incendiary fire with reasons why the insured would prefer the insurance to the property, and yet his reputation and good character saved him from suspicion, even, of being the direct or indirect cause of the fire.

GROWLERS

"Oh, yes, there were several dissatisfied members of the old company growling and bitter over their loss, and among them men none too good for anything which it might be for their interest to do; but they had no interest in having the factory burn.

"Might do it out of spite or hate? Well, boys, hate, and spite, and jealousy will lead to meanness and crime, but pecuniary interest has caused more fires than these. Just think of Judas and his paltry thirty pieces of money once in a while.

"I said to myself, in this case there is only one man who could be benefited by that fire, and that man's character says he couldn't do such a thing, or have it done.

"The claimant was out of town and would not return until the next afternoon; so I made some inspections of our risks in the vicinity and some inquiries about the burned property and its owner, but learned nothing new, except that he was in financial trouble. This was not as important an item of information to me then as it would be now.

"I stopped at the village tavern that night and listened to the bar-room talk about the fire, some of which was evidently intended for my ear, they knowing my business. My claimant was 'solid' with his neighbors, and I went to bed with the conclusion that I would take proofs for whatever the property was really worth.

"When I made my appearance in the morning I found a queer, unprepossessing, sort of sickly, old-looking boy waiting for me. He beckoned me to go outside with

him. I followed him into a wood-house, and, after he looked about to know that we were not observed, he asked me if I was the insurance man who had that cheese factory loss.

"Being assured that I was, he proceeded to say that he had been 'snooping' around after tracks; that he had found rubber-boot tracks on the road repeated in a plowed field, and that one of the boots made a peculiarly marked track; that he followed these tracks to a certain tree, where a horse had evidently been tied, and that horse tracks to and from the tree were traceable, and that the off-hind foot of the foot of the horse was unshod.

QUEER DETECTIVE

"This self-constituted detective now looked all about him again, and, reaching up, whispered in my ear: 'I hev bin over in the supervisor's pastur and found thet his old gray mare has lost the shoe on her off-hind huff.' I asked a few questions, and felt sure of the correctness of his observations.

"The insured resided about a mile and a half 'across lots' from where the cheese factory was. To go by the highway, from his house to the factory, he must travel southerly to the village some two miles and take a northeasterly road some two miles farther, four miles altogether.

"To go 'across lots' he could go on foot or on horseback, very near to the factory, with only one rail fence to hinder; so my informant believed that he or some one else used the 'old gray mare' to get there and to get away.

"I went to the location, found both the rubber-boot and horse tracks, and took note of their peculiarity. I even found where the fence was let down, and found the 'old gray mare,' with one shoe off and three shoes on.

"All this indicated the path of the incendiary, and some other things, but nothing particularly decisive as to who the incendiary was. However, I determined what course I should take, and proceeded to take it.

"I went back to the village, and, late in the afternoon, when I hoped to find my man home, I drove to his house, which I found a very neat and comfortable farmer's establishment. He had not returned, but was expected, and, being invited, I made myself at home with his intelligent wife and pretty little daughter, the latter some six years old.

"In speaking of the fire the wife remarked that she was almost glad her husband was sick the night of the fire, for that fact would prevent any gossip among the old, disgruntled shareholders in the factory about his having anything to do with the fire.

"It appeared that he usually slept upstairs, but on this night he complained of not feeling well, and insisted on sleeping downstairs in the 'spare room,' so that his possible restlessness would not disturb his wife's sleep. This little straw confirmed me in what I had already decided upon.

A POINTED INTERVIEW

"About the time supper was ready my man arrived, and I met a pleasant, bright sort of a man, but I somehow had the notion that when he learned what my business was, it disturbed him. He seemed to avoid a square eye-to-eye look at me as we talked during the supper, which I took with the family. Nevertheless his general good appearance and manner made me half hesitate in the plan of procedure I had determined on.

"Supper over, he took an offered cigar, and we strolled outside, talking over the fire and concerning the property, value, etc. 'Mr. ———,' finally said I, rather abruptly, 'do you own a pair of rubber boots?' He promptly replied that he had a pair, or did have, but he hadn't used or seen them since spring. He supposed they were up in his garret. I said I would like to see them. He said he would go and see if he could find them, and when I proposed to go with him he made no reply, and I followed him to the garret.

"The boots were found lying among trash of one sort and another — such things as get into attics, and which you hear of after a dwelling fire. Everything was dusty and covered with cobwebs *except these boots!* They showed recent use, and the sole of one of them matched the peculiar feature of the tracks I had seen.

"He did not believe that any one else had used them, and when I suggested the reasons why they could not have lain there all summer undisturbed, he showed the first signs of being 'rattled.'

"He hesitated and stumbled in his talk, and was incoherent in what he said, and seemed catching at straws. It was warm in that garret that September evening, although there was an open window at each end, furnishing some light and ventilation; but with these boots before me I was 'solid' in my determination to give him the benefit of my theory of the fire then and there.

FACE TO FACE

"'Mr. —,' said I, 'I have been here nearly two days, and not finding you home I have been investigating this fire, and have learned enough to satisfy myself as to its origin. I propose to plainly and frankly, and in all kindness, tell you what my theory is. You certainly ought to be the first person to know it. You must not ask me how or where I got my information, neither must you be offended at my conclusions, as for the present they will be between ourselves. This is the way this case looks to me:

"'This cheese factory has been a source of annoyance and loss to you, both when you were only a shareholder in it, and since. Practically it had no value, and you knew of no way to make it bring you much of anything; you could plan no way to get rid of it.

"'You were being pressed by your creditors, and knew of no way of meeting their demands without selling something that you did not want to spare, or mortgaging your farm, which your pride forbade.

"'You knew that you possessed a policy of insurance for a very much larger sum than you paid for the property. It was assigned to you, and you did not consider that you had anything to do with getting the overinsurance.'

"'My man was getting a little uneasy and finally braced up to the demand whether I meant to insinuate that he had anything to do with the fire.

"'Just wait,' I continued, 'until I get through. You often wished that the property might burn, and possibly you may have been less careful and more careless in its fire arrangements, hoping an accident might happen. You have probably read your policy over more than once, and perhaps you have inquired of some agent concerning the company, whether the policy was all right, etc.'

"'Who told you that?' broke in my man; 'I only inquired if the assignment was as it should be. Is there anything wrong in that?'

"'No, sir,' I replied, 'but I want to give you my idea of how you have been overcome by indulging and harboring an enemy to your conscience, and how I believe you have been overcome by it. I may be all wrong, but hear me through.

"'I won't go into all the various little things which had their influence in compelling you to the resolution that the building must burn, but a combination of things or some one thing suddenly added to others — probably it was the approaching expiration of your policy, or some stronger pressure of a creditor — finally weakened your better nature and matured your wrong thinking into a deliberate purpose.

"'I will tell you plainly how I think that purpose became an act, and in doing so I want to assure you that I believe it may have been the one wrong and wicked act of your whole life. You had wished many times before the fire that the building would burn, but I am sure you have terribly regretted ever since that it did burn.

THE NIGHT OF THE FIRE

"'Now, on that night, as I believe, you feigned sickness, and you did not sleep in your usual room. You wanted to be on the ground floor, for unobserved leaving and returning. Wearing these boots you rode your gray mare across the fields, letting down the one fence in your way, to an elm tree, and there you tied the mare and proceeded to the factory, which was in flames by the time you accomplished your hurried return to your home, and you haven't been a happy man since that night.

"'My quiet investigation of this matter makes me honestly confident that you burned that building, but you know whether I am mistaken or not.'

"He had taken a seat on a box and seemed deeply agitated. After a little pause and with a choking voice, he said: 'My God, don't tell my wife what you think; don't tell any one, it would kill me.'

"I told him I could make no promises, but I was there to end his claim, and that he must know how I felt towards it. He said that was the least thing about the matter, and he would do whatever I said about that; but he begged to know what I had been told, and who told it, and implored me to consider his wife, his family, and relatives. I told him all I had further to do then was to get my policy, and that I thought he had suffered, and would suffer, enough punishment for the crime; and that after the surrender of his policy no one besides himself would be much injured by what he had done.

"But enough of this long story. Of course that fire cost the company nothing but a small expense, and I never regretted that I kept the matter from the knowledge of that community. He mortgaged his farm to meet his debts, lived to pay off the mortgage, and died honored and esteemed.

REFLECTIONS

"It was the case of a moral hazard created by circumstances combined with insurance, and which did not exist when the policy was written. It was but a mild case of financial embarrassment, but you can see how even a mild case operated on a pretty good citizen.

"Oh, yes, I hunted up my queer detective before I left, and gave him a crisp five-dollar bill.

"No, couldn't always bring about the same results with a different sort of man, nor with the same sort, unless with the same frank, kindly and direct method.

"If I had 'beaten about the bush,' indirectly insinuated my suspicions, or let them reach him second-hand, or harshly charged the crime upon him, I would have probably stirred up an angry self-defense, that would have made trouble, for he was a man who had 'fight' in him when aroused.

"Boys, always deal as directly and frankly as possible with the claimants themselves. You may have to get information and impressions from others, but don't 'give away' what you believe or know yourself about the case you are investigating.

"Remember, too, that loss claimants are not enemies, but friends, until it plainly appears that they are frauds from intention, and persist in being frauds.

"No, I don't believe any of the neighbors of the cheese factory owner ever knew how the loss was settled, for he always answered inquiries, that it was settled satisfactorily to him.

"Yes, of course, the agent should have canceled the policy, instead of consenting to the assignment, but he lived fifteen or twenty miles away and knew nothing of the circumstances. Yes, he ought to have made inquiry, but he didn't, another instance of the nonsense of letting agents write distant risks, those outside their frequent or even occasional observation.

"Say, boys, you all know old man S—— W——, agent at ——? Well, he saved his companies two considerable losses this year — one by refusing assignment of policies, and the other by snatching up his policies — on indications, in both cases, of unpromising conditions of property and owners. He's a 'peach,' and solid with his companies and all his community, and deserves to be.

"It is, sure enough, late, and I do not remember ever getting pulled into so much talk before. I only hope I have said nothing hurtful. Good night."

— June, '96.

* * *

IT IS PLEASANT to know from a daily report that the insured is a highly reputable man or firm, but information of this sort is not so valuable when the risk is occupied by tenants, or unoccupied. In case of tenant occupancy, the character of the tenants is of most importance; and in case of nonoccupancy, the incendiary, tramp, or the fellow who loves to see the fire department perform, are attracted by the unprotectedness of vacant property, even when owned by the best of citizens.

A YEAR OF CONVALESCENCE in the business of fire insurance ought not to make us forget the wasting sickness which it suffered during the few years previous to 1895. There is a pronounced presence of the burning epidemic of those years still lingering in the record of 1896.

We must be careful as to rates, hazards and other business hygiene, in order to avoid a return of what ailed the business a little while ago, and from which it has not fully recovered.

He is an unfortunate man who does not know he is ill until he is just awfully sick; but some corporations have not realized that they were dead until after a post-mortem. — *June, '96.*

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ELECTRICITY CONTINUES to contribute its surprises, even to experts, as the following communication will show:

Getting only fifteen dollars a month in an agency office, and being interested in late electrical development, I laid my "wires" for an "X raise" out of the boss, thinking that if I succeeded in getting even a V raise it would be worth the experiment.

His chief "attraction" is our "incandescent" typewriter girl, and as he comes "insulate" mornings I said to myself, I will "install" myself his "spark arrester" and "generate" a "current" of jealousy by a "secondary battery" — if I "conduit."

So I provided for "resistance" by a "fusible cut-out"; with an "automatic switch" for an "alternating" plan of giving his wife an "arc light" view of the situation, if my "transformer" scheme should be "short circuited." But, there was a "burn-out"! my "low tension" "concealed wiring" was "crossed" by his "high potential" "overhead system" and I was "fired." My "X raise" came from the "shock" of his "500 volt," No. 10 boot!

Now, can you help me to a "connection" with some underwriter's electrical inspection office?

* * *

NO, I COULDN'T recommend Mr. — for a fire insurance agent," said a reference named by an applicant for agency appointment. "He is too fiery himself — too inflammable. He's been sparking a new flame, but this match, like others in his experience, has gone up in smoke. He blazed up at some little thing, fired off a lot of hot words, and made himself a burning shame. He's personified friction, a walking ignition and a talking conflagration."

* * *

WITHIN a few weeks (and it has occurred before), this office has received letters from property owners, residing in towns where we have resident agents, inquiring how the writers could secure GLENS FALLS policies.

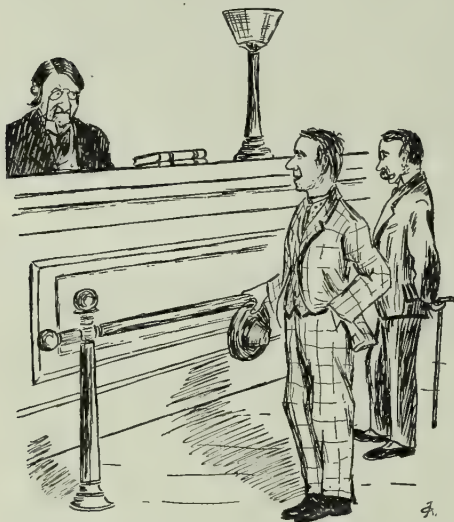
We, of course, gave them the names of our local agents, and asked these agents to call upon these friends of the Company, and apologize for not having already solicited a share of their business. An apology is the least that GLENS FALLS agents can offer their reputable fellow citizens, having property desirable to insure, for any neglect or delay in presenting the Company for consideration, use and mutual benefit.

— *June, '96.*

* * *

DON'T LET GO your reputation to rise in the world; it may come handy for a parachute. — *Washington Star.*

A LADY MISSIONARY in Africa, writing a GLENS FALLS friend, mentioned her surprise and delight in finding an old calendar of this Company decorating a native's hut in that far away land. More useless things than GLENS FALLS calendars have been sent to the heathens before now. A friend, in a recent visit to Pike's Peak, found a GLENS FALLS up-to-date calendar at the U. S. Signal Station, with other approved chronological records and data. — *March, '95.*



* * *

YOU HAVE been found guilty," said the judge, "but as the evidence is circumstantial and conflicting your sentence is to be suspended."

"Say, jedge," said the prisoner, "Great Scott, jedge,

don't say that. If I had knew thet axidently settin' fire to an old barn was a hangin' offense, I'd never done it, no sir, I wouldn't."

* * *

THE FOLLOWING was not likely written by Shakespeare (or Bacon), yet it has a sort of Hamlet-Macbeth, soliloquy on the ancient agency practice of fire insurance — probably a revised morsel from Bosh Jillings:

— See you them silly moths
 Thet fly about yon faggot's flame and singe
 Their wings — anon return to singe again
 And nothin' learn from singeing? Like these poor
 Senseless things so swarming solicitors
 Of Insurance Cos. do sacrifice
 All experience, rates and common sense
 To get a risk. Force large amounts on small
 Values. The larger the "commish" to them
 The crazier they ackt. You need not seek
 Them. Keep still and silent and they will crowd
 Upon you the means to mend youre fortune.
 They question not, nor make survey, nor use
 A little caution. They point the way
 Which they should block and bar. Inshurence,
 You're a poor old friendless kuss
 Goin' on from wuss to wuss;
 For those who dali eat your buttered bred,
 Heep burnin' coles upon your kalcined hed!

* * *

I AM A YOUNG MAN," says an applicant for an agency, "but have had a life-long experience." We suppose this means that he has lived all his life, so far.

WE KNOW of two fire insurance agents who are defendants in suits brought by their clients for losses by fire. These agents had sold their customers worthless policies, representing that they were good indemnity. The losses came and revealed the fact that the insurance was only in name.

A thirty per cent commission seems to have influenced this unhappy situation, at least in one of the cases. Other holders of these policies have sued these agents for recovery of the premiums paid.

Vendors of insurance must understand that they are not exempt from the responsibility for misrepresentation which applies to other trades or business. Sell only good goods, gentlemen. — June, '96.

* * *

*Glens
Falls*

"OLD AND TRIED"
INSURANCE COMPANY
As Organized in 1896

J. L. CUNNINGHAM, *President*. STEPHEN BROWN, *Vice-President*.

R. A. LITTLE, *Secretary*. C. J. DELONG, *Treasurer*.

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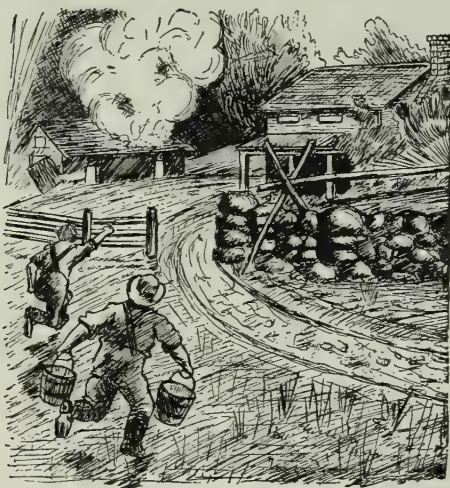
* * *

CATTLE BUYER—"What do you call your white faced cow worth?" *Cautious Farmer*.—"Be you a buyer or an insurance man? For that cow is dead, and we just guess she was struck by lightning last night. Anyhow, she was insured agin lightning."

* * *

AN AGENT'S first typewritten letter begins: "It is no longer I take my pen in hand, but now I take my little typewriter on my lap," etc. Would simply remark that "such conducts as these" have broken up happy domestic relations before now, and, as we happened to remember, one good agency.

DEAR OLD BARN of my boyhood days, for it was an old barn when we youngsters of the neighborhood made it our play-castle. It had never known repairs, but all through the years it bore up, under



various lazy owners, an industrious mortgage, a continuous overinsurance, and some other causes of friction and spontaneous combustion, until lightning from the skies during a brief midday summertime thunderstorm honored it with a brilliant but honest disappearance from the rural landscape. And I, a gray-haired adjuster, came to the post-mortem with such admiration of its patient endurance of provocation to burn which few country barns ever resisted, that I was reluctant to apply a five per centum per annum depreciation for its more than

a century of "uncombusted" existence. I tried to comfort the owner and the mortgagee and respect my own appreciation of all the circumstances. Dear old barn of my boyhood days, peace to thy honest ashes!"

* * *

THERE ARE those who do not do so much as so many.

* * *

IT IS A total loss to try to incubate an agent from a "bad egg."

* * *

BETTING does not make the better better, so better not bet.

* * *

AS SMOKELESS powder is now a fact, the battles of the future are likely to be smokeless. How it would please fire underwriters if smokeless fires could be reasonably expected. How it would rid the business of the increasingly imaginary, sentimental and exorbitant claims for smoke damages. These claims are often, and usually, in substance, things hoped for, and in evidence, things not visible.

* * *

MR. HEIDLEHEIMER — "What do you pay for insurance on your store?" *Mr. Rosengarten* — "I ain'd carrying any insurance. I don't need id yed." *Mr. Heidleheimer* — "Bud suppose de blace purns ub?" *Mr. Rosengarten* (impatiently) — "Vhy, how can id purn ub when dere ain'd no insurance?" — *Life*.

MUCH of last year's history of fire insurance lies in the future.

* * *

DON'T FLIRT with the business of fire insurance — marry it or quit your fooling.

THE GLENS FALLS INSURANCE COMPANY. — This Company has been giving to the world, on the recurrence of each New Year, its annual statement, each an improvement upon its predecessor. That a company with \$200,000 capital should have a net surplus over all liabilities of \$1,374,243 is astonishing, and accounts for the fact that the stock of the GLENS FALLS is the most valuable of any fire insurance stock in the world. Certain it is, that the secret of success in fire underwriting is making the GLENS FALLS one of the solid institutions of the land. — *Insurance Agent* (New Orleans). *March, '95.*

* * *

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER — “What is charity?”
Insurance Agent's Small Boy — “It's what used to be given to folkes whose housens burned down, before there was so many fire insurance agents.”

* * *

THE GLENS FALLS still leads in the book value of its stock. It now stands at \$787.12, while that of the next nearest company stops at \$646.31 — one hundred and forty points below the GLENS FALLS. Remember that book value is based upon the company's *net* financial standing. — *March, '95.*

* * *

THERE ARE educated pigs, but none that don't like mud.

* * *

SOCIETY is what people are when they know they are watched. — *Ram's Horn.*

* * *

TWO PERSONS die every second, and a dozen Lloyds are born every day; in fact, sixteen were born in New York in one day, recently, all fathered by the same parties.

* * *

THERE ARE 2,750 languages in the world, all of which will be inadequate to express the feelings of the fellows who are insuring in the Lloyds, by and by.
— *The Oriflamme. March, '95.*

* * *

WHEN ONE gets the idea that an occasional white lie is justifiable, he is apt to grow color-blind.

* * *

TALK IS NOT always cheap, for there have been some large verdicts in slander suits.

* * *

BUSINESS MEN dislike a quitter and also those who don't know when to quit.

* * *

THE FIRE-FIEND is sometimes surprised and defeated, even in the absence of regulation water supply. A case is reported of the early discovery of a fire in a barn by a maid while at her vespertine milking. Her prompt use of a pail of milk prevented what otherwise would have been a considerable loss.

In a San Francisco fire an 18,000 gallon vat of wine furnished useful help in discouraging the flames.

IT WAS A CARELESS and indefinite notice, but an agent wrote one of his solicitors "Your Jane Smith expired yesterday," meaning her policy. Now, as Jane was the solicitor's daughter living in the same village as the agent, the solicitor had a few grievous hours. Brevity is good, but there is such a thing as "too-briefness."

* * *

ONE OF OUR LOCAL AGENTS reported a small damage to his own household personal, insured in this Company, and he was authorized to adjust. He sent in his proof, claiming a few dollars, with the following report:

"I have done the very best I could in this adjustment, and think the claim pretty near right. The assured is a fair-minded man, but at first he had an exaggerated idea of his damage and, perhaps, of his opportunity. We sat down together and patiently reasoned upon the matter, until the claimant was disposed to be reasonable, and, as your agent, I approve his claim herewith inclosed.

"The assured said he was much pleased to meet such a gentlemanly adjuster, and your adjuster expressed his pleasure in dealing with such an honorable claimant. We parted very friendly."

* * *

IT IS ASTONISHING what a first-class incendiary the ladies work up in a fancy lamp shade. A sufficient quantity of colored tissue paper, or light silk material, puffed here, gathered there, and bunched into gorgeous blossoms of unclassed grandiflora all around, supported by a slight wire frame, a red-hot duplex kerosene lamp for a center, and there it is, a delight to its creator, but a terror to those who fear fire. If it withstands the scorching heat of the lamp, it is handy in catching luminosity from a match in lighting, or from tipping the wonderful construction over the lamp chimney to regulate the wick.

They do not cost their owners very much, but do cost insurance companies a good deal.

It is strange that timid, æsthetic women, who would scream at a mouse or a little blaze, can deliberately contrive such a decorative fire danger, and actually expose their own "sweet home" to its possibilities.

* * *

THE QUALITY of insurance at Lloyds is so dubious and uncertain as to raise the question whether it reaches the dignity of contributing insurance. It might not actually contribute to the assured's loss, but would probably grade as "other insurance," qualified by the conditions, "valid or not, solvent or insolvent." — *Sept. '95.*

* * *

ONCE MORE would remind agents to have their name and location appear upon every separate communication to this office. We have quite a collection of letters, memoranda and slips ordering supplies, referring to some risk, or asking questions, which have been the rounds of our desks for a guess at the handwriting. They are without name or place, and no doubt some of our agents wonder why their inquiries have not been answered.

VERY AIRY and graceful are the cheap or costly styles of lace window curtains, so common to the view of passers-by on our residence streets. It is nice, too, to have an unprotected swinging gas jet just behind these hangings, for the light and color it gives at night. But to an insurance "feller" it is a fearful combination. There are so many ways by which the curtain and the burning gas get together, to the serious disadvantage of the curtains, the frescoes, the carpets, the furniture and insurance companies, that we condemn the loose, flowing curtains and reprobate the conveniently near gas burner. Losses thus occasioned, and some for considerable amounts, are too frequent in our last year's record.

* * *

THE VERSATILE parlor match has brought many losses to insurance companies, and has brought some unhappy surprises; therefore, the following is interesting. As usual, the frisky parlor match came out ahead.

When this juror's name was called he arose and said: "Judge, I had a box of parlor matches explode in the back pocket of my trousers a few days ago, setting them on fire and burning my flesh so severely that I am unable to sit on the jury or anywhere else, no matter how tired I may be."

He was excused.

* * *

MR. SOLOMONS — (*Solicitor for the Palestine Lloyds to the counter clerk at the home office.*)—"Dit you tolt dot manasher dot I would pe myselef marriet tomorrow, undt I wants me a nice bresent?"

Counter Clerk — "Yes, Mr. Solomons, and he told me to give you a nice fountain pen with his compliments."

Mr. Solomons — "A vountain bens!! Gracious! Say, you go right away tolt dot manasher dot I pring me dis Lloyds more as \$500 bre-miums und I vant me a some-aggount vedding bresent."

Counter clerk enters manager's private office and returns.

Counter Clerk — "The manager says he will do the handsome thing and make you a present of our policy for \$5,000 for three years on your livery stable and contents. You know it rates at three per cent. per annum."

Mr. Solomons — "Oxcuse me of I dond dake me dot bolicy. I dakes me my commission on dot bolicy *in gash*, undt dot vountain bens!"

* * *

OCCASIONALLY look over your register deliberately and see whether you are carrying risks which with your present better or more knowledge of them and of the insured, you would not now write if offered. If you find such cancel them, of course.

* * *

DON'T WASTE any time explaining the spite and meanness of your competitors. Such men usually get hopping mad with envy to see an agent just quietly, decently and thoroughly attending to his own business.

ONE OF OUR AGENTS sends an attractive little circular letter which he has issued to property owners, from which we give the following samples:

You wouldn't deposit a few dollars in a bank about which you knew little or nothing.

You wouldn't pay for a cheap little building lot without knowing all about the title.

Why should you take a fire insurance policy on your home, your household goods, and the apparel of yourself and family in a company you know nothing about? Your policy may sometime stand between you and poverty.

There are good companies and extra good ones. Just a little bit of investigation would enable you to name them.

Wouldn't it be a right down sensible thing for you to know which are the very best?

No use riding in an ox cart when a parlor-car would cost no more!

* * *

IT WOULD SEEM that reporters of fires were making much misuse of the word "lurid." It figures in the description of most of the big and brilliant blazes, although defined as meaning "a pale, dull color; ghastly; gloomy." "Lurid" is a better word to describe the conflagration effect upon insurance offices than to picture the conflagration itself.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING letter to another company than the GLENS FALLS is delicately suggestive of how lightning sometimes does not strike where and when a policy-holder claims it did.

"I suppose you have received a claim from my neighbor, —, for a cow killed by lightning. Now, I have been expecting ever since I learned that she was insured that this cow would not be able to survive the usual thunder and lightning of the season — she has been so sickly and feeble all summer. It is strange, however, that she finally expired without the provocation of even a cloudy day. Her worn-out bovine spirit left its beefy tabernacle when all was sunshiny, bright, and peaceful in and about the little valley where she had lain for two or three days, too failing to chew her cud, and during all that time the heavens were unobscured and silent!"

* * *

AN ESTEEMED AGENT sends a letter of thanks to this Company for the prompt adjustment and payment of its losses in a fire involving other property and other insurance, and noting that there were unpleasant complications and delay in other adjustments.

The fact is this Company deserves no credit for its promptness, nor are the other companies to blame for their delay in adjustment. The credit in our case and the blame in the other cases attaches to the agents who wrote the policies.

The GLENS FALLS policies were carefully written and for amounts which made the losses clearly total. In the other cases the mixed interests were not clearly defined in the contracts, there were other bad policy features, and overinsurance. — *Sept. '95.*

IN ANSWER TO INQUIRIES would say that our NOW AND THEN is not regular in its appearance. Its issue is not permitted to interfere with anything else. When memoranda sufficient for an issue accumulates it is printed. As there is but little time outside the daily "grind" in this office, our little paper must continue to be appropriately named. It is pleasant to know that agents would like to see it oftener, the latest suggestion in this direction being set out in the notable and forceful language of the governor of one of the Carolinas to the executive of the other, "It is a — long while between drinks." — *Sept. '95.*

* * *

THERE IS A QUALITY of fire insurance abroad which represents an exchange of risks. The insurance assumes to take the risk of fire and the insured takes the risk of collecting the insurance if there is a fire.

* * *

THE INQUIRY has been made several times of late whether the satisfaction of a mortgage requires an endorsement canceling the mortgagee loss payable clause. As the clause makes "loss payable to — mortgagee as his interest shall appear," the payment of the mortgage leaves no interest in the mortgagee, and the clause becomes inoperative, and no endorsement is needed.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING is a suggestion for an epitaph which fire insurance agents should live to be worthy of at expiration:

HE WAS ALWAYS A JOINT-STOCK AGENT OF JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.

Honesty was his unimpaired Capital;

Common sense his sufficient Surplus.

His diagrams were correct and his reports complete and prompt.

His 15 per cent. hand was a stranger to his 85 per cent. pocket.

*No over-insured goat or other on-the-left-hand fire-bug will accuse him in the
Final Adjustment.*

HIS POLICY WAS CONCURRENT WITH THE GOLDEN RULE.

His earthly fire indemnity has been transferred to cover PERPETUALLY
in mansions above.

OF SUCH IS THE HEAVENLY BOARD.

* * *

THE RECENT DEATH of Mrs. O'Leary, who owned the cow that kicked the lamp that started the fire that burned Chicago, gives a bit of interest to the following sample of the gingles, set agoing in those days by this same alleged incendiary cow — this by Bosh Jillings:

I sing of that famed O'Leary cow —

That cloven-hoofed beef

Whose hellish mischief

Wrought such ruin and grief

As no other kine,

Since Adam's time,

Or the monkey's before him — 'till now.

What fame has she of the crumpled horn?
 Or she that jumped over the moon?
 Or the golden calf that Aaron made
 When from the Lord all Israel strayed,
 Compared with her whose kick of scorn
 Decreed a mighty city's doom?

Nor ended thus, but far and wide —
 The marts, and stocks, and men;
 All sorts of trade; the pen,
 And tongue, and potent press
 Groaned with the dire distress!
 Upon the land, upon the tide,
 In palace, hall, and lowly cot,
 In arctic cold and torrid hot,
 Nothing escaped — all things, somehow,
 Got kicked by that O'Leary cow.

Think how she died — g-r-andly died!
 Roasting in the fiery tide
 Which she had kicked ablaze.
 A bovine Sampson in her death;
 More glory in her latest breath
 Than in all her breathing days!

Where are the men who drank her milk?
 Where those who milked that cow?
 Who cleansed the stable where she stood?
 Who knew her in her calfyhood?
 Who gave her vealy muscles food
 To make her kick as kick she could?
 Where are the cattle of her ilk?
 Is the breed extinct just now?
 Let the records show
 All we may know
 Of this she-cow of Chi-ca-go.

What a kick was that!
 What a panic shock!
 And how it knocked
 Insurance stock!
 How underwriters all through the land,
 Erst smiling and serenely bland,
 Were dazed, and crazed,
 And sore amazed
 To see their rules and sage decrees,
 And gathered assets in the breeze —
 All to the winds their plans,
 And work of brain and hands;
 Their schemes, and hopes, and prospects bright,
 Kicked by a cow, higher'n a kite!

And now these men, experience taught,
 With wisdom much too dearly bought,
 Put with the questions that they ask
 Before they write a risk or pass
 The smallest line indeed:
 "HAVE YOU A COW?" and "DOES SHE KICK?"
 "IS HER STABLE IRON, FRAME, OR BRICK?"
 "IS SHE THE O'LEARY BREED?"

ELECTRIC-WIRE-FIRE-IRE

I'M a public-defying electric wire,
 A worker of death and dangers dire;
 From roof and gable, from pole and spire
 I swing in the air and laugh at the ire
 Of the trembling folk who don't admire
 The sagging, snaky electrifier.
 Ho! ho! I shout when I start a fire;
 Ha! ha! I shriek as the blazing pyre
 Of homes and goods rises higher and higher,
 And Death's black wings flap nigher and nigher.
 I'm the darling pet of the "expert" liar,
 Who don't know what to expect or require
 Of my shocking soul and singeing attire
 And lurking perils that never tire.
 Bury child and wife, if you desire,
 Bury your mother, bury your sire,
 But let me remain an overhead flyer,
 Firemen's plague and life-savers' defier —
 O, bury not the electric wire.

* * *

NO FAIRY TALE of insurance literature is more sweet and delightful than the everyday imaginings and fancies of children; a cane, a stick, or papa's foot becomes a galloping steed, and a bundle of rags a living creature to be loved, and petted, and spanked. A few pieces of broken china are a good enough banquet equipment, and the pebbles from a gravel bank a sufficient currency system; just as some older children play with make-believe insurance as if it was real indemnity.

Wonderfully actual to them are these conceits of childhood, and yet a slap in the face, or other evidence of interrupted harmony, and all the delights of an enchanted back-yard vanish with the suddenness and completeness of a break-up in the local boards of grown-up underwriters, on occasions.

But we started to give the sweet and expensive incident of two golden-haired little girls who played with their dolls in their father's well-filled barn. Imagining that their pets were ill, they tenderly laid them on soft beds of hay, and closing the doors to give the "darkened shadows" of a well-arranged "chamber of pain," they pityingly watched and comforted their suffering darlings. To give more reality to their vigils, a tiny night lamp was supplied by a box of wax matches, "given with every purchase" at the village store. The rest of the story is merged in a common everyday insurance fact — loss \$750.

* * *

A DAILY REPORT noted that the risk was "within a stone's throw of a hydrant." An inspector of the risk says: "I admire the man who threw the stone, for 'twas a marvelous throw!"

OUR AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE is very often flavored with other than mere business mentions, and these "asides" are often more pleasing than the writers may think, even should it be in the line of friendly criticism. We are glad of our agents' approval, and not so sensitive of disapproval as to make any one hesitate to speak their mind. We all belong to the same family.

* * *

THE FOLLOWING unique inscription is displayed on the door of an agency office:

"You'll find me here every day —
Unless you call when I'm away."

* * *

MERRY CHRISTMAS is getting to be about as much dreaded by fire, accident and life underwriters as the glorious Fourth of July. The season of the Christmas tree is growing to be prolonged. Not only is it used all along during the holidays, but it is often left standing, if it escapes burning, and relighted to give the children one more "merry" and the tree one more chance to blaze, it being now fairly well seasoned and more susceptible.

These fires have made quite a record this year in churches, chapels, Sunday-school rooms, private residences, store windows, and other places, with loss of property and life, besides many serious injuries to persons.

An editorial in the *N. Y. Tribune* deals at length with this inflammable subject, and is none the less serious for its facetiousness.

Though we hear much about forest fires every fall in Michigan, Wisconsin and other states, the true and genuinely formidable forest fires of this country rage during the fortnight after December 25, in the Christmas trees. We dare say prudent people would prefer to dispose of them in the forests, rather than to burn them in their own houses, along with their houses. Instead of being covered with tinsel, and tapers, and presents, a Christmas tree really ought to be hung full of hand grenades, and a fireman should stand in the hall with a chemical extinguisher strapped to his back, a fire engine standing handy before the house, and an ambulance and surgeon within call.

The writer goes on to describe a typical Christmas tree of a good resinous sort, decked with plenty of cotton for a snow effect, and numberless penny candles and tissue paper ornaments, and continues:

The head of the family touches the match to the tapers, and the next day is observed living at a hotel and in earnest consultation with an eloquent and incredulous insurance adjuster, who knows the lowest price of everything and seems to have the facilities for building a new house for about one quarter of the amount that it would cost any other human being.

The editorial concludes with a pleasing suggestion which we trust some inventor will make practical:

Let us have a fire-proof Christmas tree. The trunk and larger limbs may, perhaps, be made of terra cotta. Wire, or something of that sort, will possibly do for the smaller branches. The foliage can be fashioned from asbestos. To the whole thing can be imparted an inviting and Yule-tide green with fire-proof paint, and — there you are! The patent non-combustible Christmas tree is bound to come.

SOMEHOW when lightning condescends to strike a cow or horse, it picks out, according to its insured owner, the most valuable one on the farm. "Death loves a shining mark."

* * *

SAID an incendiary-nosed tramp to his pard: "Say, Bismarck, we are just down on our luck. You know dat farm feller what gived us his barn for a bodoor last spring, an' gived us feed, an' tobacky, an' pipes, an' matches, an' told us de barn was way up insured? I jest intervood him for a remembrance from his insurance money an' I'll be dog-goned if he want insured in dose Lloyds and he can't get a cent!"

* * *

LEGISLATION along the line of building laws would do more to reduce the cost of fire insurance than any other scheme of insurance legislation. If owners, occupants, builders and architects were compelled to exercise and exemplify a sense of responsibility in the construction, care and protection of buildings in the matter of fire hazard, barring conflagration possibilities, fire losses would be reduced and insurance rates accordingly. The high range of fire loss in this country is largely due to neglect of the simplest principles of fire prevention.

* * *

THERE IS MUCH to give agents cause for complaint — very many things which they can devoutly wish were otherwise. We always sympathize with these complaints and these longings for better conditions of and concerning competition, competitors, local board administration, and so on.

Still it is just ordinary human nature to magnify our difficulties and limitations, and lose sight of or underestimate our opportunities and facilities.

For instance: The lovers sat side by side, looking out upon the moonlit sea.

She said, "I would like to be a mermaid, and sport in yonder liquid light."

"I would like, just now," said he, "to be an Octopus with a hundred arms."

"Why a hundred armed Octopus?" was her startled inquiry.

With a bit of hesitation, he replied, "So that I might hug you to my loving heart as you deserve to be hugged!"

"Charlie," said she, with a hurt sort of feeling in her tone, "it is sinful wasting time wishing for the impossible, instead of using the means and opportunity you already have."

Then and there the would-be mermaid and the would-be Octopus organized an ideal local association, and in their blissful four-armed bonds of coöperation you couldn't tell t'other from which.

It is well enough to have ideals in our business, and to try and achieve them, but in the meantime we must resolutely deal with things as they are, with the means we have, and perhaps by so doing we will find the difficulties less, and ourselves better equipped to meet them, than we supposed.

AN AGENT who has even horse sense ought to be able to say neigh.

* * *

AN AGENT who itches for business has to keep scratching.

* * *

SOME ARE born underwriters; others have to be appointed.

* * *

SOME MEN build better than they know, until it comes to a proof of loss.

* * *

THERE ARE MANY checks in the insurance business, yet few receive protest.

* * *

A DEED OF real estate covers from the earth's center to the zenith; and some think an insurance policy should do the same.

* * *

ALL THINGS are said to come to those who wait; but in the meantime try and get a string on what you are waiting for.

* * *

A TRAMP abroad on a pleasant morning is better than two of them lodging in an overinsured barn.

* * *

A YOUNG MAN who was all ablaze with passion for his employer's daughter was promptly put out by her father.

* * *

BETTER TO HAVE one hand on the risk which expires to-day, than both eyes on several expiring to-morrow.

* * *

THE VARIETY among insurance people is no greater than in nature, which gives us both the nightingale and the pug-dog.

EVEN A POSTAGE stamp sets the good example of sticking to one thing until it gets there.

* * *

LIFE IS FULL of risks, and insurance men are glad of it.

* * *

BEFORE you classify your neighbor's character as extra hazardous make a complete diagram of your own, showing all exposures.

* * *

IF WE COULD live last year over again we should avoid some of our mistakes and replace them with others.

* * *

NEVER JUDGE a man by his apparel as set forth in his proof of loss; look over his wife's list first.

* * *

NEVER THREATEN to take a risk from your competitor; if you are going to do it, beg his pardon afterwards.

* * *

THE COMMISSION on the policy you write to-day is more certain than on those you expect to write next week.

* * *

THE ANCIENTS believed the world was square, but several kinds of insurance schemes have been invented since.

* * *

TRUTH CRUSHED to earth will rise again and knock the stuffing out of the agent who sells poor insurance.

* * *

TO HEAR some insurance men talk suggests that the worst perdition for them would be to chuck them into some place with a lot of their own sort. — *March '96.*

HERE IS A BONANZA for sprinkled risk specialists. Recent accounts of the Buddhist Temple of Japan, nearly completed, declare it to be a magnificent structure, richly ornamented with carvings, and not counting the free labor of devoted Buddhists, is estimated to have cost \$17,000,000. It is a wooden structure, and the matter of insurance was a serious one, as the hazard was great, calling for a high rate. However, a number of powerful fountains were constructed, which can be made to play on all parts of the structure, exterior and interior, at the same time. The water can be turned from the one great ornamental fountain — which plays to the height of 157 feet, emitting 82,000 gallons per hour, and supposed to be the largest artificial fountain in the world — into these fire-fighting fountains in case of need; thus every part of the structure can be copiously drenched. We suppose faithful Buddhists will do the watchman act, and be ready to turn on the deluge at the slightest provocation.

Here is a chance for big lines for those underwriters who believe in sprinkling as a saving ordinance, and yet have a tolerance for immersion. The GLENS FALLS cannot carry it all.

* * *

TORNADO INSURANCE is most appreciated by careful and prudent business men, who always fortify themselves against every known danger of loss, and to the completest extent possible. *Keeping and saving* is more difficult than *getting*, and the successful business men are those who best protect themselves from *losing*.

Mortgagees, individual and corporate, are requiring tornado insurance in cases where their security depends, even somewhat, upon buildings. It is needed wherever fire insurance is essential as collateral. It is a protection within the reach of all, and most needed by those who are the least able to repair, or rebuild, an unroofed or annihilated home.

— June, '96.

* * *

IT WAS AN INFERNAL tea which a Westchester County (N. Y.) lady undertook to brew recently. She poured gasoline into a tea-kettle, mistaking its smell, we suppose, for pure Croton water. She was burned to death and two other women seriously injured.

— March, '96.

* * *

EVERY LITTLE BIT of separate memorandum sent from an agency should have the name of the agent or agency, or both, and if referring to a policy the number should always be given. These slips are apt to get separated from inclosures to which they refer and become "waifs" in this office.

* * *

JACK — "Say, Charley, I had to laugh yesterday to see young Noodle's discomfiture when he fired his moustache in lighting his cigarette."

Charles — "Damage it much?"

Jack — "Yes — you see it was burned down." — *Roxbury Gazette*.

A DRUNKARD is a suicide on the installment plan.

* * *

AN AGENT has much to learn whose reflections come only from his mirror.

* * *

AN AGENT in making up his mind should use good materials.

* * *

CORPORATIONS and individuals may be equal "before the law," but what a difference afterwards.

* * *

DON'T DESPISE small risks. Even an elephant gratefully solicits a peanut.

* * *

DON'T USE liquids to make yourself solid with your patrons.

* * *

FEW MANAGERS have weak eyes from looking on the bright side of things.

* * *

INSURANCE agents will have occasion to forgive their friends as well as their enemies.

* * *

MAN WAS made to mourn, but poor insurance is an unnecessary grief.

* * *

ONE CAUSE of getting behind the bars is the habit of standing too much before them.

* * *

SOME INSURANCE men live blameless all their days and some of their nights.

* * *

THERE ARE members of local boards who can name as many reasons why the board is a failure as there are other members.

THERE IS now and then an agent who would be benefited by losing his reputation.

* * *

THE WORLD may insure every man a living, but the policy is not delightfully specific.

* * *

A BURNED child dreads fire; but age, experience and insurance give courage and confidence.

* * *

FIRE MAY be a blessing in disguise, but when a man has been several times blest in this way the blessing isn't so much disguised.

* * *

IT IS NOT necessary for a man to be an acrobat to tumble to the fact that a GLENS FALLS policy is a good thing.

* * *

SOMETIMES agents knowing what they ought to do avoid doing it by asking advice of their companies.

* * *

THE LIVES OF some managers are made up of prayers for more business and of regrets that their prayers were answered.

* * *

IT IS ENCOURAGING for agents to remember that the second of the two great commandments does not read, "As thy neighbor loves thee, so love thyself."

* * *

IT IS NOT necessary politeness for a property owner whose business you have persistently solicited to show you the door, but you may be thus honored sometimes.

THERE WERE pneumatic tires in the insurance business years before bicycles were invented.

* * *

SOME UNDERWRITERS have credit for good judgment when they are only having good luck.

SOME who are not 16-2-1 men want gold-dollar insurance for a thirty-cent premium.

* * *

THE AGENT who attends strictly to his own business has a good, steady job.

* * *

AN AGENT in reporting an alleged lightning loss said, "The insured says this horse was killed by lightning, but I know he is mistaken. Take no action until you hear further." Hearing nothing further we concluded that Mr. Agent convinced Mr. Insured that he was mistaken.

* * *

IT WAS late in the day after election and the senior member of a large agency firm in a certain city had been rejoicing and imbibing, and showed it as he was making-believe business at his desk.

A broker in passing out said to the agent: "Just tried to give you a good big line on a first-class risk, but your counter clerk says you are full."

"Yes, 'ir," replied the agent, "I 'mit it — I'm (hic) fuller'n a tick."

* * *

THE DANGER of having gasoline about is shown again in the case of a farmer who filled his lantern lamp with gasoline, mistaking it for kerosene. When the lamp was lighted it promptly exploded, inflicting serious injury to the farmer's person and burning his well-filled barns.

And, yet, these volatile products of petroleum are such domestic pets!

* * *

SOME OF OUR AGENTS have done themselves and the business in their territory good service by an intelligent use of the local press. By occasional original contributions of pertinent insurance information and by republishing well-selected extracts from the insurance journals, to which all such agents are, of course, regular subscribers, they have helped to a better understanding and appreciation of fire insurance and to a higher consideration of the vocation of local underwriters.

* * *

IN A NEW HAMPSHIRE TOWN the fire alarm is rung from the bell of a pretty memorial church recently built. The first occasion for using the alarm occurred a few nights since.

A measly old isolated barn of little or no value was discovered to be on fire, and the sexton was anxious that this first should be a prompt alarm. He rushed to the near by church in his night-gown, forgetting the key. In his zeal he smashed in a \$500 gift window, just to ring out the tidings that the good-for-nothing old barn was doomed.

It would not be strange if the companies insuring the church heard from this little incident — for, was not fire the cause of the sexton's smashing excitement?

IN THE FINANCIAL meditations of corporations and individuals a larger income is the most easily comprehended remedy for an unpleasant balance sheet, therefore, income has come to be a matter of over-estimated importance. Sound finance regards saving as of more consequence than getting, and it requires less financial skill to swell incomes than to crystallize a real, unconditional net credit balance.

* * *

CONSIDERING the magnitude of its transactions and multitude of its details, and dealing as it does with all kinds and conditions of property and with all sorts of men, fire insurance is not only a legitimate, indispensable, and honorable business, but, notwithstanding the many reforms which can be suggested, it is intelligently and, above all, honestly administered. Its wrongs have been against itself.

* * *

WE HEAR quite a little about the ratio of loss to premium, and not infrequently note important calculations and forecasts predicated upon it, as if it were a safe, stable, and unvarying ratio. Still, every underwriter knows that losses do not adjust themselves to rates.

For instance, suppose the loss ratio to be 60 per cent. under prevailing rates, and suppose an average reduction in these prevailing rates of 25 per cent. and let us further presume that the aggregate loss will continue the same as before. From these premises we get a loss ratio of 80 per cent. — an increase of one third of the former ratio. We sometimes forget that rates as well as fires influence the so-called loss ratio. — *Aug.*, '98.

* * *

CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL said of insurance contracts: "Policies of insurance are generally the most informal instruments which are brought into courts of justice." Courts have said harsher things of them since Marshall's time. Printed forms have helped somewhat, and so has the increased intelligence of agents; yet crude, informal, and defective forms abound and are the cause of much correspondence in offices of agency companies, difficulties in adjustments, and some litigation. Much of this comes from thoughtless and careless belittling of the importance of the insurance contract. — *Aug.*, '98.

* * *

SOME INSURANCE MEN talk as if they really believed that property owners can be so enlightened as to the beneficent mission of fire insurance and the delicate adjustment of compensation to indemnity, that they will insist upon equitable forms and force the acceptance of adequate rates. Property owners, however, get their impressions of insurance, as a business, from what they observe of its practice, rather than from what they hear of its theory, and they will continue to try and secure all the benefits and advantages the business will give them, without regard to the reasons why they should not be given. — *Aug.* '98

* * *

GLENS FALLS agents have the best of the best kind of fire insurance to sell for what it is worth. To sell it for less would make it

worth less. If some property owners do not want to buy this kind now, let us preserve the "brand" for future demand. Good sense may not always abound, but it has its "innings." —
Aug., '98.

* * *

THIS AGENT is not ill, but is spending an hour of "recreation" in pondering over the results of a local rate war, for which he is mostly to blame. His thinking fails to bring pleasure to his features, or cheerfulness to his attitude. He feels like a veteran who has fought in vain and at a loss. Any agent who has been involved in a war of rates will recognize its lassitudinous effects.



* * *

THE FOLLOWING gathering of amusing answers to daily report interrogatories probably indicate more of intended humor than actual ignorance of the nature of the questions:

Is risk within sufficient water supply? *Yes; most of the time — too much during spring freshets.*

Has assured ever suffered loss by fire? *Has burned out twice, but suffered no loss. He was insured.*

What kind of hose used by fire department? *Golf and common socks.*

Is assured an old resident? *83 years old, and growing older all the time.*

Any incumbrances? *Recently married a widow with four children.*

Do pipes enter attic or unused rooms? *No. His wife makes him smoke in the barn.*

Is assured a long resident? *Yes; 6 feet 2 inches.*

What kind of roof? *Very good — don't leak.*

How far is risk from nearest hydrant? *About ten miles — next village.*

Is assured trustworthy? *No matter. I make him pay premium in advance.*

Is assured successful in his business? *Yes — his kind. Five years ago he owed but a few dollars, and now owes thousands.*

Is he native to the town? *Always born and brought up here.*

Any liens? *No — walls plumb and perpendicular.*

How long has assured occupied building? *Always, but she won't tell her age.*

Is there other insurance? *No — just a few Lloyd and Mutual policies.*

Are all policies written precisely alike? *No — different agents, different handwriting.*

What water facilities? *Creek during fall, winter, and spring. Showers in summer.*

Has assured credit? *Lots of it — that's what he lives on.*

Has assured enemies, or fear of incendiarism? *He keeps a few summer boarders.*

Is assured free from litigation? *No — he has lots of it. Is a lawyer.*

Does assured keep merchandise and cash accounts? *Keeps merchandise — can't keep cash.*

Are side walls without openings? *Yes; when the doors are shut.*

What is the local board rate? *From \$3.00 to \$5.00 per week.*

VACATION FROM VOCATION is thus early the occasion of a felt silence at several pleasant and usually responsive spots in our agency vineyard.

Already some of our agents are where breakers break and brokers do not break upon their serenity — where pounding surf, treacherous undertow, and sharks without a spark of professional courtesy offer all the risks under a floating policy which the most hazardous agent dare take, even to please a friendly undertaker.

Others have pitched their tents with contentment and a satisfactory clear space by some adequate water supply, and are dropping a few lines to the trout instead of to this office — indifferent to the possible dropping of a few lines from their books at home.

Possibly there are others who have accepted the reduced rates, limited liability, and special hazards of some rural landlord whose advertised schedule of "fresh air" and "scenery" constitute the only salvage from a total loss. We do not know where you are, or where you may go, but all have our best wishes for a renewal of your strength and vigor, at any rate. Should any of you stray to this region of summer delights, be sure to make a personal inspection of this office and permit us to manifest our mutual concurrency in the favor.

Vacations, like hornets and rate wars, have an end, and when your outing expires and your inning is renewed please remember us who remain very truly yours — at Glens Falls. — *May, '97.*

* * *

A DEAD beat does less harm than a live one.

* * *

MOVIE OF A TELEPHONE TALK between an agent and a manager — talk by the agent, movie by the manager:



1. "Hello? Is this the manager? Good morning. This is your agent at Jonesville."



2. "Say, do you remember that excelsior plant you so promptly turned down on me for rate?"



3. "Well, it was damaged by fire some weeks ago. Suspicious origin of fire."



4. "Yes, cost the companies about five per cent. and there was difficulty in settlement and I was glad that my office was not involved."



5. "Now, the whole shooting match burned last night, every building. Total loss. Hello! hello! Ain't through yet. Hold line."



6. "Surprised to learn just now that you reinsured a big slice of this risk for another company at a lower rate. Well, take your medicine. Good by."

ANY MAN can start a newspaper or an insurance agency; but it takes quality to keep them going.

* * *

THE WORK of a collector of premiums is a promising one, and it is dun from the start.

* * *

IT IS UNFORTUNATE that those most willing to do us favors are those who can't.

* * *

AN UNRELIABLE man's pen is mightier than his word.

* * *

BE COURTEOUS to strangers; for some of the largest insurers in the world are strangers to you.

* * *

SOME ARE guilty of being underwriters; but others are falsely accused.

* * *

AGENTS who have experienced rate wars understand that tariffs are as valuable for protection as for revenue.

* * *

INSURANCE essayists forget that even a complete diagnosis does not cure the disease.

* * *

BLESSED are the companies that keep cool in hot times, for their days shall be many in the business.

* * *

AGENTS regard the coming of some specials as a visit, and of others as a visitation.

* * *

EXPERIENCED agents are often reminded by their younger competitors of how much they have forgotten of what they used to think they knew.

* * *

THE YEAR of our Lord 1899 will also be the fiftieth of the Glens Falls Insurance Company.

* * *

SOME board rules work one way, some both ways, and others don't work at all.

* * *

THIS OFFICE has learned that an occasional impulse is no evidence of a purpose.

* * *

GERMAN FIRE DEPARTMENT. "I have the honor to announce, Captain, that the fire is in the fourth story and our ladders and hose will only reach the second."

Captain. "Indeed? Then we must wait till the fire gets down to the second." — *Fliegende Blätter*.

INSENDARY ADVISE

BI BOSH JILLINGS

IF YOU'VE GOT A LITTLE KOT,
 That duzzen't pleze you well;
 Or a played-out stok ov goods,
 Which you kan't no way sell;
 Or a lot ov barnes and sheds,
 All goin' to deokay —
 Why, go to some inshurints man
 Too lazy to survey,
 Who kares less for his kompanies
 Than fur his own "komish,"
 And get them all insured, I would,
 Fur any sum you wish.
 Then pray (as the prophit did),
 Fur a *profit-able flame*
 To clean you out! And then, dear friend,
 Buy new goods and bild again.

In doin' this, remember tho,
 Thet prayer and wurks together go.
 If earnest prayer fail yure desire,
 Then wurks will shurely bring the fire!

* * *

THE INNOCENT incubator is proving a hatcher of fire as well as of chickens. Many companies will not assume the hazard, and others charge for it. It is an unwatched, out-of-sight continuous night and day burning of an oil lamp in cellar, garret, or out-of-the-way place. A neglected burning oil lamp has great fire possibilities.

* * *

IF INSURANCE is to be added to the curriculum of the schools, as some would have it, there will be need of text-books. As a "starter" in this direction the following collaborated A, B, C primer is submitted for kindergarten and primary use. We do not apologize for its nonsense, for there is a good deal of that in the business of which it treats.

A is for AGENT:

Who gath-er-ing Pre-mi-ums here and there,
 Gives his best Com-pa-ny the Lar-gest share;

Or for ADJUSTER:

Buy-ing Ashes where fires have been,
 Pays the Premiums back a-gin.

B is for BRO-KER:

A Go-be-tween, who has been known
 To Har-vest where he has not sown.

C is for COM-MIS-SION:

An A-gent's prey when he has said:
 "Give us this day our dai-ly bread."

D is for DI-A-GRAM:

Too oft a guess — or of-fice dream —
 Of Sit-u-a-tions never seen.

E is for E-LECT-RIC WIRES:

From roof and peak, from pole and spire,
 And thread-ing homes with Dangers dire,
 They Cross, and Ground, and Kill,
 and Fire.

F is for FIRE FIEND:

A con-su-ming Friend, of whom be-reft
 Our Oc-cu-pa-tion would soon get left.

G is for GLENS FALLS:

Which stands for Fire In-dem-ni-ty,
With all its points from A to Z;
In-dem-ni-ty of which 'tis true:
"Sur-passed by none — E-qual'd by
few."

H is for HOPE:

In-su-rance sol-ace, help and cheer,
For 't brings the long-ex-pect-ed near,
And gives a lit-tle glimpse of what
We've mourn-ed, be-cause it "came-
eth not."
So some with fold-ed hands will mope
And wait and noth-ing do but Hope!

I is for IN-CEN-DI-A-RY:

The In-su-rance Dev-il whose clo-ven
hoof
Has scorch-ed its seal on man-y a
Proof,
And oft-en been sup-posed to be
The man be-hind the pol-i-cy.

J is for JUSTICE:

Which In-su-rance gives, but sel-dom
gets
From Ju-ries or Leg-is-la-tor-ettes.

K is for KICK-ER:

While Kick-ers in all walks are found,
The In-su-rance Spe-cies much a-
bound,
And kick a Kick which can't be beat
For strength of Leg, and size of Boot:
Small size of things which make them
do it,
And Sighs of those who feel the feat.

L is for LOCAL BOARD:

A use-ful thing when at its best,
And born of Com-mon Sense;
But when In-ac-tive and at rest —
Just a Board-up-on a Fence.

M is for MAX-I-MUM and MIN-I-MUM:

Twins of well-match-ed Lat-in names
And In-flu-en-tial Mates;
Max — he makes up the Claims,
And Min — she makes the Rates.

N is for NOZ-ZLE:

A snout, or nose, at the end of the
Hose,
Through which on the Fire the wa-ter
goes;
And wheth-er it Sal-vage or Dam-age
bring
De-pends on the Men be-hind the
thing.

O is for OR-GAN-I-ZA-TION:

A great big word with mean-ing small,
And oft-en noth-ing means at all,
Meet-ings, Speech-es, Pledge, Re-
solve,
Which ad-in-te-rim dis-solve;
As if through all it were ex-press-ed —
"What to Each it Seem-eth Best."

P is for PRE-MI-UMS:

How to Reap them, more than how
to Keep them,
Has bur-den-ed Days and ban-ish-ed
Sleep when
Grasp-ing dreams of Scoop-ing
schemes
For In-come gain by ev-ry means,
For-gets to dam Dis-burse-ment
streams.

Q is for QUERY?:

A ques-tion to an A-gent sent
A-bout a Risk, or what is meant
By this or that — to him so clear,
He thinks the Que-ry very queer.

R is for RATE:

A fun-da-men-tal thing is Rate,
Which al-ways should be ad-e-quate,
And just-ly com-pen-sa-tion be
'Twixt Haz-ard and In-dem-ni-ty.
So much for The-o-ry, and yet
The prac-tice is, "What can we get?"

S is for SUR-PLUS:

Best meas-ure of In-dem-ni-ty,
Cri-te-rion of Sol-ven-cy;
Cap-i-tal's help-ful Sup-ple-ment,
Proof of a Com-pa-ny's intent
To for-ti-fy it-self, and hence,
De-ser-ving be of Con-fi-dence.

T is for TAX-ES:

Coun-ty, State, Mu-ni-ci-pal,
Lo-cal, spe-cif-ic, gen-e-ral,
Di-rect, ob-li-que, re-cip-ro-cal,
Re-tal-i-a-to-ry, stat-u-to-ry,
In-quis-i-to-ry, pro-hib-i-to-ry,
Dis-cre-tion-a-ry, Man-da-to-ry,
On Pre-mi-ums and Oc-cu-pa-tion,
On the A-gen-cy re-la-tion;
On Fran-chise, As-sets, Cap-i-tal,
Pol-i-cies, Div-i-dends, *et al.*
By Stamps, As-sess-ments, Fees,
Li-cen-ses and Pen-al-ties;
Ex-am-i-na-tions, Ad-ver-tis-ing —
An ag-gre-gate most Par-a-lyz-ing.

U is for UN-DER-WRI-TER:

He is the In-su-rance Al-pha-bet,
And all the things it spells;

Yet oft the name's a *nom de plume*
Of one who Un-der-sells.
A hust-ling, bust-ling, Risk In-vi-ter
May not be an Un-der-writer.

V is for VER-TE-BRATE:

A rare sort of In-su-rance Man
Which here and there is found,
And as we need more of the Breed
'Tis hoped they'll more a-bound.

W is for WAI-VER:

When you say too much, or nothing
say,
Do, or don't do this or that,
Call on the As-sured, or keep a-way,
Talk straight out, or through your
hat —
Courts will find in your be-ha-vior
E-nough to "con-sti-toot" a
Wai-ver.

X stands for MUL-TI-PLI-CA-TION:

Mul-ti-pli-ca-tion and Ad-di-tion
Fig-ure in the Out-go side
Of In-su-rance, while Di-vis-ion
And Sub-trac-tion ebb the tide

Of Prof-it, thus, as some Contend,
Burn-ing the Can-dle at each end.

Y is for YIELD:

In its stretch-y, limp, Back-bone-less
sense,
This word has an act-ive pres-ent
tense;
For In-su-rance yields — "Gives in"
too much.
To the All per-va-ding Ad-verse touch.

Z is for ZERO:

A glo-ri-fied Ci-pher which much ob-
tains
In the re-cord of In-su-rance gains;
In tell-ing the sto-ry of net re-mains
To those who all but their Sal-a-ries
give
To Milk a bar-ren Heif-er in a sieve.

And so, at last, our Prim-er is ended,
And, like In-su-rance, though well
intended,
It ends in naught — ex-cept the bit
Of fun we've had in wri-ting it.

* * *

A FIRE STEAMER as a fire hazard has not much entered into underwriting calculations; but the GLENS FALLS has lately paid a loss caused by sparks from a steamer while putting out a fire.

* * *

THERE is gladness in his gladness,
When a new line makes him glad;
There is sadness in his sadness,
When a lost line makes him sad;
But the gladness of his gladness,
And the sadness of his sadness,
Is n't in it with his madness,
When slow collections make him mad.

* * *

CONSIDER the chickens, my son,
And wisely give up the cup;
For when they take to drink, by gum,
Their bills are sure to go up.

* * *

EXTRACTS FROM AN INSUREMENTS ALMANAC

WRIT BY BOSH JILLINGS

SIGNS

When a man gits burned out misterriously, its a signn he is well inshured.

DOMESTICK RECIPES

Tew make muneey: Inshure yure old barns and bile soap in 'em. I hev knone fellers tew make one hundred dollars and a half, over and abuv expenses, this way.

Tew make sum men's meanness visibul to the naked i: — Try to ajust thare inshurence after a fire.

Tew run a boardin hous: Keep up board rates.

A shure kure for burns: Insurents — it takes out the soreness and prevents information.

Tew make a fire: Insure a transient stock of redy-maid clothin, or sich like, for twenty 5 cents more then its wurth and wait till after dark.

EKLIPSES AND TRANSITS

Kant tell what inshurence korporashuns will be totaly eklipsed this year, but there will be a good many parshal obskurations visibul throuout the United States and Grate Britan. In these days 'tis hard to tell when a kompany is teetotaly eklipsed — their own folks don't seem to no it themselves.

There will also be some transits of kompany planets and offisers worth lookin at. For times and places watch the Insurents Press and git your smoked glass redy.

MONTHLY PROGNOSTIX AND ADVISE

JANUARY. — Look out for Annuel Statements and see how good an awful bad year hes proved.

FEBRUARY. — Blessid Munth of least truble, for thy days are few and go quickly.

MARCH. — Repair to yer atic and while the wind doth blow, behold the 10 dency uv sparks to fly outward from the defective flew and kalkulate the probabilies of realizin the blessedness of insurents.

APRIL 1ST TO 30TH. — Eggspect insurents agents 'round about this time — in evry month.

MAY. — Git ure fire insurents in the ole uv the moon an' by parlor maches for the children.

JUNE. — Stack ure hay and grain and git redy for lightnin to strike youre barns.

JULY. — Git yure boys lots uv fire krakers and secure the chance of makin the aquaintance of a "gentlemanly ajuster" and gittin ure kard uv surprize (that you got anythin') in the lokal noospapers.

AUGUST. — Pizen yure lame ole hosses and sik kows this munth when it thunders. They may think lightnin struck 'em under a lightnin claws in ure policy.

SEPTEMBER. — Git ure thrashing dun by the innercent steam portable ingine set on the wind side uv your bildins. Put yure polercy in yure pocket tew show you ain't no phool.

OCTOBER. — Kut off ure polercy kupons on yure surplus out-bildings and git redy for ure morgige intrest.

NOVEMBER. — Giv yure kerocene stove one more try and let the stove-pipe in yure summer kitchen ruff hev one red hot more and adjurn.

DECEMBER. — 'Tis a bad thing ter burn out in winter, but if u hev bin preparin fur it all summer — let her rip.

SAYINS AND THINGS

'Twas sed uv ole time thet 3 moves wus equal tew a burn, but I say unto u thet one well planned burn is better than forty moves.

Blessins brighten es tha take thare flight, which accounts fur things bein worth more after thay are burnt up than before.

If you are well inshured a fire may be a blessin in disgize; but when you hev been blest in this way severil times, it ain't disgized so mutch!

A enmy is not to be dispised; you kin lay the burnin uv youre barn tew him.

Insurents lines dew not alwais fall in plesant places.

If a man haint got a well balanced hed I am willin he should part his hair in the middle — but that wont make a good insurents agint uv him.

Saint Paul sed 'twas better to marry than to burn; but he waz 2 logickal to say that it was more profitable, tho.

Honesty used to be the best polercy in ole times; but insurents has advanced sum lait years.

Too mutch fire insurents hes bin discovered to be the origin of 1-half the spontanous kombustions.

An investigatin kemist deklares that a reckless fire insurents agint beats the electric light as a midnite illoominater.

In one town the rats git out fur new homes when a certin agent inshures thair old quarters. Rats hev instinks.

Charity kovers a multitude uv sins; but she hes to spred herself to kompete with sum fire polercies I no ov.

Sum things require more bossin than others. I man can boss an army of sogers, but it usually takes about 300 men to tell a dozen men what to do at a fire — and hev poor suksess at that.

Skedule rates iz just a \$ a fraction below what the other feller offered.

* * *

PROSPEKTUS UV THE FARMER'S FREND INSHURENTS CO.

BOSH JILLINGS, *Progeclor*

We will pay loss bi thunder and lightning whether damage insoos or not.

We take no city or village risks and do nothin in the kuntry.

We limit our lines to 5-fourths the value uv the property.

We pay fur loss of kattle by lightnin runnin at large on the farm. Tha must run, tho.

We proud ourself on prompt pay of loss. If you eggspect a fire, telegram us and we will send our note to onct.

We will inshure 3 years for half the annuel rate and fur longer time in same proporshun.

Premiums go to the agent and the kompany divides the plezure uv doin the bizness with its polercy-holders.

We kombine selekcted skeemes from stock, mutual an Llords plans.

A kapital kompany — no other kapital. It saves payin diverdends.

We plege ourself to hev no sirplus. Meny kompanys hev no sirplus to brag ov. We'll hev none an brag jess er same.

We'll hev no liaribilities. Books balercned evry night and start square evry mornin. No lingerin claims. We want no claims — jes business.

We will save expens ov taxes by havin no Assets, which is the oncertinist name things can hev. Assets hev grate tendency to Recevers — tha also be a temtation to literatorion. We make literatorion useles by hevin no Assits, an also save danger of bad invesments. Some Kompanys hev more Assets than brains, and yet are no grate shucks financially. If yer lookin fur Assets, look in the dickshunary.

We is jes organized for business an lots uv it.

We will not belong to no lokal or other bord, but reckomend it for other kompanys.

* * *

Go, lokal agents, go,

Bearing our onered name,

'Till every where that you hav went

They're glad that you hav came.

* * *

LIFE INSURENTS REMARX

The man who owed fur 10,000 tongues hed probably purchist a life inshurents agency outfit on tick.

A large life polercee don't eggsactly make a korps smile on his widdler, but it helps amazinlp to git anuther feller to do it fur him?

Think how it would molify obituary mentions when you can say: "Loss fully covered by inshurents."

* * *

IT SEEMS a bit strange, at first thought, that states glorying in so-called anti-trust laws, should first of all, and only of all, "go for" fire insurance, which has never reached anything like a trust or competition-preventing combination, and which, from the very nature of

the business, never can. The most that fire insurance has undertaken in this direction has been to secure logical and discriminating practice and rates, and this important advantage to property owners and the business cannot be so effectively compassed as by organization. The suppression of competition in the business is too wild an impossibility to be thought of. Capital is too plenty and too ready to enter the business when it promises profit, and companies are too easy of organization to dream of controlling the business. Other kinds of corporations can do this, are doing it in these very states, and unmolested by these laws.

It must be remembered, however, that the business of fire insurance is an open one — open in all its plans, purposes, and transactions. No other great business is so thoroughly public in all its details. The necessities involved in its best service of the public being misconstrued and misunderstood as hurtful combinations, they are easily aimed at and reached by legislation. In fact, some of these laws, in spite of their appearing to include corporations in general, are more especially and particularly framed to hit and hurt fire insurance, and therefore fail to reach other corporations.

The "whyness" of all this is another story. — *July, '97.*

* * *

WITH CRIMINAL indictments in Kentucky, punitive penalties in Missouri, knock-out laws in Arkansas, and encores called for in other states, the insurance fraternity have more perils to be delivered from than have some other saints.

A prominent Western manager writes: "It is difficult to do a general fire insurance business and keep out of the penitentiary." The *Insurance Herald* says: "It is safer to kill a man than to be an insurance company in Kentucky."

The courts, however, are affording some judicial modifications of these perils of hostile legislation, and yet 'tis best to continue our litanies. — *July, '91.*

* * *

WHAT WILL THE 'Old and Tried' do in 1900 to celebrate its completed half-century? is being asked. For one thing we hope to continue right on in business. This will be one way of honoring the event, for there are very few fire insurance companies that have had the privilege of doing this. The GLENS FALLS is not much given to anniversary, or other spasms. It has officers, employees, and agents who have passed such hurrah mile-stones as twenty, twenty-five, and more than thirty years of continuous service, without any interruption or disturbances of the usual. Some of us are thankful that our service has been uninterrupted during all these many years, for we needed our modest wages and have enjoyed an appreciation which has been the more solidly and satisfactorily manifest because it has been constant, even, and sincere. There is more reason to doubt the appreciation which we are made to hear than that which we learn to feel. After all, a half-hundred years is a rare old age for a fire insurance corporation. The vicissitudes of the business tend to poor corporate health and short corporate life, and there are only four or five fire insurance

companies of this state that have lived so long, and none of these are enjoying any better financial and general health than the GLENS FALLS.

We may not raise any special semi-centennial Eben-ezer, but will, all the same, remember and be thankful for all the service, favors, and loyalty which hitherto have helped. The present and the future will call for the most attention and consideration when the GLENS FALLS enters upon its second half century. — *July, '91.*

* * *

AN AGENT who habitually breaks his word may be all right — if he stutters.

* * *

LIFE INSURANCE would suffer less if its losses were limited to the cash value of the subjects insured.

* * *

THE SPECIAL agent who continually insists that half the agents do not know how bad the other half are, is, likely, not personally to blame for the ignorance.

* * *

WHEN VERBAL soliciting fails, try the effect of appealing silence — it may at least be appreciated.

* * *

TIME WORKS wonders, but keeps at it twenty-four hours every day.

* * *

IT OUGHT to be some consolation to a widow that her loss is over-insured.

* * *

THE MOST fluent talkers may have an impediment in their thinking.

* * *

SOME UNDERWRITERS achieve their greatest prominence when they reach the undertaker.

* * *

THE HISTORY of underwriting repeats itself, but the history of some underwriters is repeated by their competitors.

* * *

AN UP-TO-DATE agent does n't borrow troubles of the future, or worry over those of the past.

* * *

IT DOES not signify so much to say of an agent that he is "spotted," if he happens to be freckled.

* * *

A BIKE-riding agent may not always appear straight and upright, but this will be overlooked if he is bent on getting there.

* * *

DIPLOMACY with your pride is the art of noting the underwriting objections to risks you failed to write.

* * *

WITHDRAW THYSELF when thy soliciting becomes weariness, but refreshing thyself, return.

* * *

AT MANY AGENCIES one bad risk will adulterate an otherwise desirable business.

* * *

SOME UNDERWRITERS will sympathize in all soberness with the Irishman who, after "a night of it," was observed clinging to a lamp-post by a friend on the other side of the street. "Hello, there, Pat. Come over here," shouted the friend. "Bedad," replied Pat, "'tis all I kin do ter sthay where I'm at."

FROM WHENCE come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war among your members? James iv: 1.

* * *

SAY, DO YOU remember away back, Ben Bolt,
 Away back when insurance was young,
 How 't was said to be on its last legs, Ben Bolt,
 And its dirges and requiems sung;
 And through the years since as they've flown, Ben Bolt,
 How oft it was thought just alive —
 But your business and mine has grown, Ben Bolt,
 And the lusty old corpse seems to thrive.

* * *

Judge. "You have been found guilty of burning your property and by the atrocious use of gasoline caused an explosion which endangered the lives of your neighbors. What have you to say?"

Prisoner. "Jedge don't you forgit that I'm the only one that got knocked out by that explosion, and I ain't myself yet. It durned near killed me! Besides, I suppose this trial foolishness will make me lose my insurance and I



think you ort to discharge me as not likely to do that thing in that same way agin. Look at me Jedge, ain't I been punished surficient?"

* * *

SOME GOOD first-sight impressions fail from over-exposure.

* * *

FEAR OF BEING caught in a lie does not evidence love of truth.

* * *

SOME INSURANCE men are too slow to be guilty of hasty words.

* * *

IT WAS SAID of a certain army that the intelligence, loyalty, and bravery of its rank and file not only brought glory to its commanders, but actually made them better generals.

May not this result repeat itself in the recent State and National organizations of local agents? So far, their level-headed legislation and influence have been in the direction of helpfulness, and this, we believe, can reasonably be expected for the future. On the principle, "what is best for the companies is best for agents," these organizations promise to accomplish much of mutual good — good not likely to be otherwise achieved.

Most insurance organizations become weak through power, but we

believe these associations of agents will avoid this paradoxical experience.

Anyhow we heartily commend them, for what is expected of them.
— *July, '97.*

* * *

AN AGENT writes with reference to collecting premiums: "I have had a very promising month. Many promises, few collections."

Another says: "I have diligently tried to personally see premium owners, but found they were mostly out — out of cash."

* * *

SHE — "John, get up and start a fire."

He — "Maria, why do you keep up your incendiary suggestions and insinuations? Between you and our over-insurance the Lord only knows what may happen."

* * *

WE DO NOT know of any deaf mutes engaged in the agency business, but would n't they make dumb good agents?

* * *

A COMPANY has been formed in England to indemnify married people who have twins. Some of our fire insurance companies ought to take out a policy, for at the pace they have struck they are likely to produce triplets, or even quadrupeds, by their annexes.

* * *

AN AGENT received a "query" from his company asking if the tenant dwelling named in a certain daily report was the last one shown by the map on Center Street, and is it occupied? He replied, "Last, but not leased."

* * *

A GENT — "When I get into my new office there 'll be no delay in reports or remittances, everything will just go like clock-work."
Special Agent — "I see; same as heretofore — tick, tick."

* * *

AN AGENT writes: "Business was not contagious last month — that is, it was n't easy to catch!"

* * *

IT IS SAID that a body of water fourteen feet thick is raised to the clouds from the sea every year; but this, if true, hardly justifies the belief that this aerial dampness affords a good and reliable water supply for fire purposes.

* * *

IF YOU are a coward, you will be attacked by cowards; they are many. If you are brave, only the brave will attack you; they are few.

* * *

THE SODA ASH pulp mill of the Poland Paper Company at Gilbertsville, Me., which burned recently and caused a loss of about \$125,000, with \$75,000 insurance was sprinkler equipped, but the water

happened to be shut off the day of the fire! It might better have been shut off all the other days of the year. — *Nov. '97.*

* * *

ONE INFLUENCE of a rate war is to make insurance men, whatever their political opinions or party classification, unanimous in favor of a tariff for protection as well as revenue.

* * *

THEY HELPED every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. — *Isaiah 41: 6.*

* * *

A POST-VACATION CREATION

I AM BACK from my vacation
And its helpful recreation,
To resume my tough vocation
With renewed exhilaration.
Among quite an aggregation —
A piled up accumulation —
Find your requests for explanation;
For diagrams and occupation;
Added clause and alteration;
Values, liens, and map location;
With "What about that expiration?" —
And other calls for information
Which you will get in due rotation.
Regret that you have provocation
For your righteous lamentation
Of my long procrastination
To remit in liquidation.
Now — without prevarication
Or undue exaggeration —
I have funds in expectation
To soon relieve this situation.
Thank you for your moderation
And kindly words of approbation.
Pleased to have your commendation
And your friendly estimation.
May our "Old and Tried" relation,
So far free from irritation,
Prove to be of long duration.
Yours, with much consideration,
JOB SMITH, Agent, Cross Roads Station.

* * *

APPROPOS THE FORMER method of failing companies quietly retiring through the open door of re-insurance, we quote a portion of the after dinner remarks at a banquet of fire underwriters, a couple of years ago by a GLENS FALLS man.

Considering all these hardships through which our business has come, it is doubly delightful that so many are here representing live and "kicking" companies.

But where are some of the companies whose official representatives have hereto-

fore graced this annual festival by their welcome presence? Their names are still familiar, but where these conspicuously absent corporations?

An enthusiastic artist was once showing a friend his new marine painting of Jonah and the whale. "I see the whale very plainly," said the friend, "but where, in all that raging green sea, is Jonah?" "Just notice," said the artist, "that protuberance right below the whale's front fin — that's Jonah." (Laughter.)

Now, brethren, have n't you noticed in the last annual statements of certain companies — and their officials are here present — have you not distinctly observed a "protuberance" in their items of assets, a "swelling" of premium receipts for last year, and a little "hump" in unearned premium liability? Well, my friends, when you observed these little fresh "mounds" of figures, you should have uncovered your proud heads — for beneath them were the sacred remains of the companies "gone dead" last year. (Laughter.) There they are solemnly enshrined in the welcome sepulchre of re-insurance. (Laughter.) To return to Jonah and the whale. You are all familiar with this ancient fish story, and know that Jonah proved an undesirable risk, which that corporation of the deep hesitatingly carried for three days and then rejected as cancelled from date — and the whale felt better. I am not a prophet as Jonah was, but it occurs to me that it might, by and by, prove a happiness to some of these voracious re-insuring companies if they had the instinct so markedly characteristic of this "great fish" of Jonah's time, and be able to relieve their overloaded and distressed corporate stomachs by throwing up these burning remains! (Laughter.)

* * *

WHEN LOCAL RATES are "in the air" the schemes of competition go beyond the expectation of securing or holding business. They go to the extent of making the "other fellow," who is most likely to get it, carry it at a ridiculously low rate. In fact, the agent who does not expect to secure a risk can afford to offer a lower rate than if he were to write it, and these insincere offers are seriously met by the agent who may be under the demoralizing instruction from his company to "hold our business."

The "negotiation" between this sort of mischief-making agent and the property owner bargaining for the lowest rate becomes, sometimes, about as hesitatingly delicate as that between the parties to the following brief but significant dialogue:

He (cautiously) — "If I should propose, would you say 'yes'?"

She (more cautiously) — "If you knew I would say 'yes,' would you propose?"

Moral: Don't let other agents make rates for your office.

* * *

THE USUAL ANNUAL crop of excellent literature was gathered at the recent meeting of the Fire Underwriters of the Northwest. We were pleased to note that the importance of the local agent was a feature in many of the papers. The actual and the ideal agent were compared and discussed, with regret that the ideal sort did not more abound. The fact is, insurance conditions are not congenial to the growth of the so-termed ideal agent. The business and its administration is not ideal, and competition never will be, so the ideal agent is not a natural product. The real is seldom the ideal, anyhow.

But what we started to say is, the agent's status, as indicated in these papers, corresponds with the GLENS FALLS' appreciation of the influence, usefulness, and importance of those who, more than any other class of insurance men, reach and touch the public, and from

whom the public chiefly gets its impressions of the companies and the business. — *Nov. '97.*

* * *

THE RUGGED, PRACTICAL, common-sense agent is probably the best all-around type. He is courageous and level headed; expects opposition, and meets it; does not count on having his own way in all things, and is not disappointed. He is free from contribution to the evils he deplors, and very likely has modified local troubles by his influence. He may spell business with a "z," but it means business all the same. He may be rather a plodder than a "hustler," and may sometimes appear to lag in the procession: but he keeps right on, whether the band plays or not. He is much in evidence when net figures by agencies are "before the court."

* * *

THERE ARE agents who help make some of their policy-holders exceedingly nervous and apprehensive when the midnight fire alarm sounds, from downright fear that "dot vire vos *nod* my clodings store in."

* * *

LAST YEAR the siren voice of the Lloyds was heard in our land, but the chilly blasts of autumn were too much for their exotic natures, and with the first frosts "they folded their tents like the Arab and silently stole away." In our January issue we gave the names of ninety-six of these insurance "what-is-its" who had famished or vanished during the year.

This year the Mutuels have come to bat, and where they have come from, Heaven only knows. In three or four Western states they seem, like toadstools, to have sprouted up during the warm weather, from every dung hill, and there are plenty of economical and trusting souls who regard toadstools as nutritious and wholesome, even if they do bring on gastritis. — *Ori flamme. — Nov. '97.*

* * *

IN A SUIT against an insurance company the evidence showed that the insured refused to make any efforts to save his property during a fire, and endeavored to prevent others from doing so. The Supreme Court of Wisconsin held that the company which insured the property was not liable for what was burned because of such conduct. — *Nov., '97.*

* * *

THE LORD will provide," says the trust-in-Providence non-insurer. Yes, and He has among other wise and needful things provided insurance.

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Things from Now and Then

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